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How the Brahmins Won: From Alexander to the Guptas

Johannes Bronkhorst

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To Joy, with love and gratitude
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PREFACE

This book may be looked upon as the third of a trilogy that deals with the early development of classical Indian culture. The first, Greater Magadha, studied the culture of the eastern parts of the Ganges valley, a culture that was originally independent but came to be largely absorbed into Brahmanical culture, and which contributed many defining features to the latter. The second book in the trilogy, Buddhism in the Shadow of Brahmanism, depicted how Buddhism in India, in spite of remaining nominally independent, underwent such strong brahmanization that it can be said to have joined forces with Brahmanism, in vain as it turned out. The present book concentrates on the extraordinary success story of Brahmanism, which developed from a movement in danger of extinction during the last centuries before the Common Era into one that, in less than a millennium, succeeded in imposing its imprint on the Indian subcontinent and much of Southeast Asia, and did this without the help of a conquering army or an all-powerful empire. Religious conversion cannot have played a role, for one could not convert to Brahmanism. This book seeks to understand how the Brahmins did it.

This book uses material that has been published elsewhere. The material concerned has been freely modified, updated, and translated where necessary. A list of publications from which material has been taken includes the following:
During the many years it took to write this book, I learnt much from many, either in person or through their publications. It is not possible to enumerate them here. I make an exception for my wife, who encouraged me throughout this process, and suggested the title.
INTRODUCTION

In scholarly literature, the cultural and religious history of early South Asia has long been considered to fit into the following somewhat simplified chronological scheme:
1. The religion and culture that find expression in the corpus of texts known as the Veda existed before all other literary manifestations of Indian culture and constituted its background.
2. Several religious currents — most notably Buddhism and Jainism — arose within this background and to some extent in opposition to it.
3. Brahmans (the religion of the Veda and of those who identified with it) subsequently interacted with Buddhism and Jainism, and this gave rise to the culture and religion of classical India.

This scheme was presented to the scholarly world in the nineteenth century, and was a continuation of the way many Indians — including Hindus and Buddhists — thought (and still think) about their past. Indological scholarship incorporated it as established fact, and based conclusions, most notably about the chronology of late-Vedic literature, upon it.

Opposition to this scheme has taken a long time to manifest itself. Numerous publications observed deviations, but these were usually understood to be unimportant exceptions to a general scheme that remained unaffected. The tendency to gloss over ill-fitting cases was reinforced by the conviction that the scheme was based on data from different areas of research, some of them outside the realm of expertise of one single scholar. One might, for example, notice that an Upanisad that had been thought of as old was centuries younger (e.g. Oberlies 1988: 57 f.; 1995: 65 f.), yet maintain that the ‘really’ old Upanisads constituted the background of Buddhism and Jainism. Or one might discover that certain late-Vedic texts had undergone their final redaction long after the date that had customarily been attributed to them (e.g. Witzel 1987; 1993; 1997; 2006), yet be reluctant to question their date of composition. Attempts were still being made to explain Jainism and especially Buddhism in relationship to their presumed Brahmanical background, while at the same time an increasing number of scholars were coming to realize that a non-Brahmanical movement (often called the Šramana movement) had to be postulated to account for these religions (e.g. Jaini 1970; Pande 1974). The difference between the Vedic language (i.e., pre-classical Sanskrit) and classical Sanskrit continued to be invoked to prove that Vedic literature had to pre-date the famous grammian Pāṇini (who laid down the rules of classical Sanskrit); at the same time, detailed investigations showed that ‘the language of Pāṇini’ was closer to the language of certain middle-Vedic texts than to that of any later texts (e.g. Cardona 1999: 215-216). Archaeologists (most notably Erdosy, e.g. 1988; 1995a) drew attention to the presence of non-Vedic culture in the Ganges plain, but these observations were not used to question the fundamental scheme. Irregularities were also found with regard to geography. A recent example is Geoffrey Samuel’s The Origins of Yoga and Tantra (2008), which draws attention to the cultural division of northern India (Samuel had not yet seen my Greater Magadha). Samuel does not however find fault with earlier views on chronology.

In my book Greater Magadha (2007) I have tried to deal with all the important arguments that were believed to uphold the traditional scheme. The combined force of the numerous anomalies in the various domains — revealed by others as well as by myself —
left no doubt as to the conclusion to be drawn: the traditional scheme is incorrect, and has to be replaced by a better one.

The new understanding of the cultural history of early India offers a different chronology. It does not take for granted that the Vedic corpus in its entirety has to precede all non-Vedic developments recorded in surviving literature. It also introduces a spatial dimension: the heartland of Vedic-Brahmanical culture was to the west of the confluence of the two rivers Ganges (Gangā) and Jumna (Yamunā). East of this confluence, in the area I have called ‘Greater Magadha’, an altogether different culture had its seat. This cultural distinction still existed during the last centuries BCE, and had been considerable. It was primarily in the region of Greater Magadha that the so-called ‘second urbanization’ (after the first one of the Indus civilization, which had disappeared a thousand years before) took place. It was in this same region that the political unification of most of the subcontinent was centered, culminating in the Maurya Empire (ca. 320 – ca. 185 BCE).

While the new understanding of the cultural and historical situation in early northern India solves certain problems, it also raises new questions. These were not dealt with in Greater Magadha (or not in any depth), and have been dealt with only to a limited extent in more recent publications (such as my book Buddhism in the Shadow of Brahmanism, 2011). Some of these questions will be dealt with in the present book, especially such as concern the transformation and subsequent development of Brahmanism in South Asia.

The new theoretical framework of the early Indian situation no longer looks upon Brahmanical culture and religion as the more or less universal background of all later developments. Quite the contrary, Brahmanism now presents itself as initially belonging to a geographically limited area, originally centred in the middle and western parts of northern India. It was in this region that Brahmanism continued the culture of a largely hereditary class of priests, the Brahmins, who derived their livelihood and special position in society from their close association with local rulers.

This changed with the drastic political changes that took place in the northern parts of South Asia, perhaps beginning with Alexander's invasion, culminating in the unification of much of the subcontinent under the Mauryas, and ending with a number of catastrophic invasions after the empire's collapse. Alexander came from a different cultural world altogether, and tolerated Brahmins only to the extent that they did not stand in his way: where they did, they were slaughtered without mercy. The Mauryas had their base in Magadha (part of ‘Greater Magadha’ and therefore home to a non-Brahmanical culture) and had no particular interest in Brahmins and their sacrificial tradition either. The invaders that preceded and followed their rule were even less interested (at least initially). As a result, Brahmanism as an institution was under threat; it either had to face disappearance, or reinvent itself. It did the latter. Brahmanism underwent a transformation which enabled it to survive and ultimately flourish in changed circumstances.

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1 Perhaps already earlier. Lubin (forthcoming c) suspects a link with the new urbanization: "Indeed, if the rise of the city-states led to any economic drain on the countryside (in the form of taxes or tribute demands), village śrauta priests may well have suffered a loss of patronage."

2 On the claim that the Maurya Empire owed its existence to the counsel of a Brahmanical minister, Čānaka, see below.

3 Cp. Francis 2013: 12: “Le brahmanism ancien doit dès lors se reformuler, devenant aux alentours de notre ère ce qu'on appellera l’hindouisme.”
Brahmanism — here defined as the culture carried by and embodied in the Brahmins, a group of people who emphasize the purity of their descent from both father’s and mother’s side — descended from a priestly religion with heavy emphasis on elaborate sacrifices. The Brahmanism that in due time succeeded in spreading all over the Indian subcontinent and Southeast Asia, and which we will occasionally call the ‘new Brahmanism’, was primarily (though not exclusively) a socio-political ideology. Brahmanism insisted on the separate position that Brahmins occupy in the world and in society. To the extent that they interact with society, they find their natural place at the top of the social hierarchy. Their separate position guaranteed them the exclusive possession of spiritual knowledge and power. They also had superior knowledge of the correct hierarchical order of society (with the Brahmins at the top), and about the correct manner of running a state. Brahmanism had not abandoned its elaborate sacrificial heritage, to be sure, but now came to include different (and sometimes totally unconnected) forms of religious practice. In this way it could adjust to a variety of religious cults, with one non-negotiable condition: Brahmins were the ones most suited to establish and maintain links with ‘higher’ realms; they were the ones to advise rulers on social and political matters; and they were the ones to occupy the highest place in the social hierarchy.

The outcome of this Brahmanical transformation was quite extraordinary. A thousand years after the establishment of the Maurya Empire (presumably a catastrophe for the Brahmins), Brahmanical socio-political ideology predominated in an immense geographical area, reaching from Vietnam and Indonesia at one end to the western frontiers of the Indian subcontinent and Afghanistan at the other. This dominating presence found expression in various ways, including the use of Sanskrit, the sacred language of Brahmanism, in political inscriptions, in courtly literature, and even in an important part of the literature of Buddhism and Jainism. The American researcher Sheldon Pollock (1996; 2006) has coined the term ‘Sanskrit cosmopolis’ to designate this phenomenon.

In order to understand the incredible success of the Brahmanical vision of society and politics, it is important to recall that it was not the outcome of political conquest or colonization. Brahmanism spread by other means than the force of arms — initially in the Indian subcontinent, then also into Southeast Asia. The spread of Brahmanism is also not a mere matter of religious conversion. As noted above, Brahmanism should not exclusively or even primarily be thought of as a religion, but as a socio-political ideology with a variable religious dimension. Rulers who adopted it, did not necessarily convert

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4 This has been observed by others, e.g. De Casparis & Mabbett 1992: 288.
5 Brahmanism illustrates in this way the limited usefulness of the category ‘religion’; see Nongbri 2013.
6 For Southeast Asia alone, Rau (1975: 7) speaks of 3.8 million km².
7 “This Indianization and partly also Hinduization of other religions took place without military conquests and is therefore considered one of India’s historical achievements by the Indologist Wilhelm Rau.” (Michaels 2004: 38, with a reference to Rau 1975: 6-7.) In spite of this, Frankopan (2015: 28) includes Hinduism in a list of religions, “the struggles between [which] were highly political”, and in which “triumph on the battlefield or at the negotiating table went hand in hand with demonstrating cultural supremacy and divine benediction.”
from one religion to another, and Brahmanism had no missionaries in the religious sense of the term.  

All this leaves modern research with a puzzle. How did Brahmanism succeed in becoming the dominant social and political ideology, at least for a considerable period of time, in an immense geographical area whose outer regions are thousands of kilometres apart? In this book I will address this puzzle by studying the main features that Brahmanism developed during its formative period, i.e. between Alexander and the Guptas.

The central thesis to be presented in this book is that Brahmanism, as it was re-created during the period under consideration, was not a haphazard collection of isolated features, but rather responded to a homogeneous vision of the world. In this vision, naturally, Brahmins play a central role. This is true to the extent that rather than describing Brahmanism as a vision of the world in which Brahmins play a central role, one should perhaps describe it as a vision of Brahmins that has consequences for the world. As a matter of fact, much if not most of Brahmanical literature from this period is directed at Brahmins and deals with exclusively Brahmanical concerns. It appears, indeed, that Brahmins of that time made major efforts to create a separate identity for themselves, an identity they could maintain in circumstances where they could not count on a tradition of respect.

In the course of time Brahmins regained the respect they assumed was rightfully theirs, but now in a much larger geographical area than ever before. With it, Brahmanical ideas about society at large gained in importance. These ideas about society can be looked upon as natural extensions of the ideas Brahmins had developed about themselves: Brahmanical standards of purity became applicable in society at large; Brahmanical ritual practices came to accompany the lives of many non-Brahmins; Brahmanical ideas of the Brahmins’ position in society were extended so as to provide a template for society at large; Brahmanical claims to royal protection turned into manuals of statecraft; etc.

In studying the spread of Brahmanism into the regions of South and Southeast Asia, one wishes to know how and why Brahmanical ideas about non-Brahmins found acceptance. The claim here made is that one is unlikely to find an answer to this question without linking it to the more fundamental question of what Brahmins thought about themselves. As stated earlier, Brahmanical ideas about society are derived from Brahmanical ideas about Brahmins. Rulers and others who accepted Brahmanism, accepted first of all Brahmins as Brahmins, i.e. essentially the way they thought about themselves.

The way Brahmins thought about themselves cannot be reduced to mere publicity in view of impressing outsiders. Much of the Brahmanical literature that is primarily or exclusively directed at fellow-Brahmins is of a technicality and sophistication that no outsider would neither be able to, nor bother, to understand. And yet, much of this technical literature (for example about linguistics) was part of the Brahmanical self-

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8 Finding the right terminology is delicate. If we define, with Harari 2014: 210, religion as a system of human norms and values that is founded on a belief in a superhuman order, we might conclude that Brahmanism is a religion. However, its frequent but variable association with various cults renders a clear distinction between an ‘ideological’ core and various ‘religious’ adjuncts obligatory. (Note, however, Harari 2014: 228: "If a religion is a system of human norms and values that is founded on belief in a superhuman order, then Soviet Communism was not less a religion than Islam.")
image, composed to support Brahmanical claims of superiority, but addressed to no audience apart from other Brahmins.\(^9\)

Brahmanism, then, should be thought of as a homogeneous vision of Brahmins and their position in the world, and primarily the result of the self-centered preoccupation of Brahmins during a difficult period in which their traditional position in the world was under threat. This self-centered preoccupation became the basis of features that in due time transformed an important part of the world. But those successful features cannot be understood without an understanding of the self-centered preoccupation from which they arose. This means that Brahmanism has to be looked upon as a whole that cannot be grasped by cherrypicking and excluding aspects of our choosing.\(^10\)

This book will try to arrive at a preliminary understanding of Brahmanism as a homogeneous whole by discussing some of its central features. It will proceed in the following manner. Part I is of an introductory nature. It briefly discusses the vicissitudes of the northwestern Brahmins shaken by political events. It necessarily concentrates on the northwestern parts of the Indian subcontinent, because this may be the only region about which we have enough information to justify such an attempt. It will also address some primarily chronological questions related to Brahmanism's new departures. Parts II will enter into the heart of the matter, dealing with a number of self-centered features that Brahmanism developed, apparently all on its own. It will become clear in Part IIA that these features are variants of two fundamental themes: separateness and resistance to change. Part IIB will concentrate on features that involved others than only Brahmins, and that determined the way in which Brahmanism interacted with society at large. These can be looked upon as an ‘overflow’ of the qualities resulting from the self-imposed life style of the Brahmins. Brahmanism, to be sure, did not develop in a mental vacuum. Yet it seems clear that the features studied in Part II originated without undergoing identifiable influences from outside. But Brahmanism was not immune to outside influence. Some instances of this will be studied in Part III. Part IV, the Conclusion, will return to the question that also finds expression in the title of this work: How did the Brahmins win?

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\(^9\) This is also true of legal texts. Olivia (2012b) adds that we can also assume a degree of affluence.

\(^10\) Indeed, this whole may in some respects have biological roots. Brahmanism's extreme conservatism and its preoccupation with purity may turn out to be two sides of the same coin. Recent neurological research (Ahn et al. 2014) shows that political conservatism and a strong private disgust reaction to nonpolitical but affectively evocative images go hand in hand.
I. CATASTROPHE AND NEW DEPARTURES

I.1. Catastrophe

I.1.1. Alexander and after

*Alexander the Great Failure* is the title of a recent book (Grainger 2007). It draws attention to Alexander the Great's boundless ambitions, and to what little came of them. Much before this book, Arnold Toynbee published a chapter called "If Alexander the Great had lived on" (chapter IV.3 of Toynbee 1969), which tells us what might have happened, if only ... In reality, Alexander did not conquer the whole world, and what is more important for this book, he did not conquer India. He successfully entered the northwestern regions of the Indian subcontinent (what is now Pakistan), but stayed there for barely two years (326-325 BCE). "Alexander had intended the permanent annexation of the North-West, and for that purpose he left colonies and garrisons behind him to consolidate what he had won, but within six years of his death, which took place in 323 B.C., Eudemus, the Greek Governor, withdrew from the Indus valley with all the forces he could muster to assist Eumenes against Antiochus, and about the same time, or perhaps even earlier, Candragupta drove out the Greek garrisons east of the Indus, and proceeded to incorporate Taxila and the other states of the Panjab into the Empire of Magadha" (Marshall 1918: 10).

It is tempting to speculate what might have happened if Alexander had not left the subcontinent so soon or, alternatively, if he had not died young and had come back. India might in that case have become part of the Hellenistic world, and Indian culture might have developed in an altogether different direction.

In spite of what might have taken place but did not do so, Alexander's short visit to the margins of the subcontinent deserves our attention for a number of reasons. The accounts of his mainly military activity are the earliest foreign precise, reliable and datable sources of information about the subcontinent we have. These foreign accounts are all the more important since the indigenous sources for the period concerned — primarily Vedic and Buddhist canonical texts — are hard to interpret and even harder to date. Additional information from the outside is therefore most welcome.

But Alexander and his fellow travelers did not just record what they saw in India. They also changed the political, social and cultural situation in the region they visited. Their impact in these domains does not always receive the attention it deserves, and is yet crucial for an understanding of the subsequent development of Indian culture.

The developments to be studied in this book began with catastrophe, at least for certain Brahmins, especially in the northwestern region of the Indian subcontinent. The available textual evidence is far from satisfactory, yet sufficiently clear to see that the events that directly affected Brahmins in that region were no cause for joy.

There had been Brahmins in the northwestern regions of the Indian subcontinent from an early date onward. Many Vedic texts, including most notably the *Rgveda*, were composed in the region more or less overlapping with modern Panjab and surroundings, including eastern Afghanistan.¹¹ Centuries later, the famous Sanskrit grammarian Pāṇini

lived in Gandhāra, an important part of northwestern India. Moreover, it has recently been argued that Gandhāra played a central role in the formation of the Vedic canon.

Regarding the date of Pāṇini, the commentator Patañjali appears to have believed that he lived and worked under the Mauryas, and therefore after Alexander. Patañjali may have been mistaken: it is also possible, and perhaps more likely, that Pāṇini lived earlier, though most probably after 350 BCE. If so, Pāṇini may have been a contemporary of Alexander, or he may have lived just before his forays. One thing is however certain: Pāṇini lived and worked in a Brahmancial milieu. We may conclude from this that Alexander, when he visited his part of the world, entered into a region with a strong Brahmanical presence.

A strong Brahmancial presence in the northwestern part of the subcontinent is confirmed by the Alexander historians. Brahmanical populations are mentioned (sometimes mistakenly as if they constituted tribes), and they appear to have exerted much political influence in those parts of the subcontinent. In fact, Brahmins evoked Alexander's ire in Sindh, further southward, with the result that many of them were slaughtered.

Soon after Alexander's departure, northwestern India became part of the Maurya Empire, initially, it seems, with help of (Katha) Brahmins who resided there. It appears that the central rulers in Pataliputra had difficulty maintaining control in this part of the subcontinent, and it is only fair to assume that Brahmins once again played a role

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12 Grammatical tradition gives Śalātura (north of the Kabul river [kubhā] and west of the Indus) as his place of residence (Agravala 1963: 10), and the Chinese pilgrim Xuanzang recorded that there was a statue of Pāṇini there. An analysis of Pāṇini's grammar itself confirms his northwestern residence; see Thieme 1935: 76 f.; Deshpande 1983; Scharfe 2009: 28 f.
13 Witzel 2011.
15 Hinüber 1990: 34; Falk 1993: 304. Deshpande (2006: 216) wonders whether Pāṇini should be situated "between the Persian and the Nanda empires". Houben & Rath (2012: 22) — with a reference to Scharfe 2009: 28 [n. 1] — make the following observation about rūpya, a crucial term in determining Pāṇini's date: "It … cannot be entirely excluded that this rūpya (formed according to [P.] 5.2.120) referred to Persian or Greek coins … In view of Pāṇini's linguistic and cultural orientation towards the north of the Indian subcontinent … it would nevertheless be more likely that reference is made to an Indian coin …". Fynes (2015) argues that punch-marked coins were in use during the lifetime of the Buddha. Cardona (2015: 174 n. 38, with a reference to Cardona 2013) is sceptical with respect to a late date for Pāṇini: "The widely held claim that Pāṇini must be dated in the middle of the fourth century BC is based on the assumption that Pāṇini's sūtra V.2.120: rūpād ahataprasāmsaya yop serves to derive rūpya as the name of a coin that is to be identified with copper-punched coins. This assumption is unjustified …"
16 See the General Index of McCrindle 1893 under ‘Kathaia’, ‘Kathaians’ (Skt. Katha) and ‘Kambisthol(o)i’ (Skt. Kapiṣṭhala); further Witzel (1997: 304) about the Ḫaṭha ‘tribe’: "The Greek writers quite obviously identified the name of the local Brahmins with that of the inhabitants of the area." and Karttunen (1997: 31 with note 60). Note here that Pāṇini is acquainted with Brahmins who live by the sword; see Falk 1994: 318.
17 Eggermont 1975: 20-22; 107-108. Bosworth (1998: 200) speaks of "the greatest repression the Brahman community had probably suffered at any time".
18 Patañjali’s Mahābhāṣya, presumably composed in Kashmir (see below), is particularly close to the Kāṭhaka, and therefore to the Kathas (Rau 1985: 103).
19 McCrindle 1893: 406. This initial support may have crystallized out in the legend of Cāṇakya, Candragupta's Brahmanical minister.
in the revolt that took place. In fact, the Āṣokāvadāna mentions two revolts in Taxila (Takṣasila). The Maurya emperor, Bindusāra, sent his son Aśoka to deal with the first. Aśoka, who had by then succeeded his father, sent his son Kunāla to deal with the second. Both times, the Āṣokāvadāna specifies that evil ministers (duṣṭāmātyāḥ, duṣṭātmāno 'mātyāḥ) had inspired the revolt. It seems only natural to assume that those evil ministers were Brahmanical counsellors. Recalling the vast numbers of people Aśoka killed and enslaved when conquering Kaliṅga later on, it seems safe to assume that his suppression of the revolt in Taxila was no gentle affair either, and that the local Brahmans felt the full force of his ire. Buddhism, though much beholden to Aśoka, preserved the memory of this ruler as particularly vicious and cruel, at any rate before his conversion to Buddhism.

There is no textual evidence to prove that the northwestern Brahmans in particular suffered under the Mauryas. And their fate may have improved once Aśoka had come to regret his earlier blood-filled campaigns. Indeed, his subsequent inscriptions often insist that Brahmans, along with others, most notably Śramaṇas, deserve respect. But even in this later part of his life Aśoka did not approve of animal sacrifice, thus depriving the Brahmans of an essential part of their livelihood. We may yet tentatively assume that the northwestern Brahmans could live more or less in peace, though with reduced political influence, during the final years of the Maurya Empire.

This changed again after its collapse. Invading Greeks and Scythians (Śaka) made their life miserable (if they were lucky enough to get away with it). This time we have direct testimony of their suffering. A number of texts — most importantly the Yuga Purāṇa — describe the Brahmanical misfortunes, and lay the blame with the Greeks and the Scythians in particular. The author(s) of this text thought that these misfortunes were an indication that the end of the world was near. We will study this evidence in § 1.1.2.

The brief sketch given so far suggests that the northwestern Brahmans may have had a rough time from Alexander onward, interrupted perhaps by one or two short periods of respite. Details are hard to come by, but there were unmistakable consequences. The region of Gandhāra, as we saw, was a centre of Brahmanical culture when Alexander arrived. More recent texts suggest that few Brahmans remained just a few centuries later. These texts will be considered in § I.1.3, below. In a later chapter (§ I.2) we will consider evidence that suggests that political events after the collapse of the Maurya Empire created opportunities for new departures.

I.1.2. The end of time

20 Thapar (1963: 21 f.) refers to "contributory evidence to the authenticity of this tradition" in the form of an Aramaic inscription, which may mention Priyadarśi, the viceroy or governor; see Falk 2006: 252-253.
21 Strong 1983: 208 ff.; 271; Div(V) p. 234, 262-263,
23 See, e.g., Lubin 2013.
24 This should not be interpreted to mean that life was always peaceful for Brahmans in the Northwest before Alexander. Witzel (1995b; 1997) has argued that invading Salvas were responsible for an interruption of literary production in that area, and for a general shift of Brahmanical presence toward the east. According to his theory, the Northwest had regained its earlier preeminence at the time of the Aitareya Brāhmaṇa and Pāṇini.
Catastrophes continued and probably intensified after the collapse of the Maurya Empire, in or around 185 BCE, due to a succession of foreign invasions. The Indo-Greeks were among the first to extend their power into the regions that had been part of the empire.\textsuperscript{25} Indo-Scythian (or Śaka, to use the Indian term) invasions followed soon. The result was a breakdown of society. From the Brahmanical point of view, this was a breakdown of the Brahmanical order of society, or of what was left of it. In a way, they may have been right in this, for it seems that Brahmanical influence on society had been strong during the days preceding Alexander's invasion, after which things had gone from bad to worse. Some texts give expression to Brahmanical disarray following these invasions. The most important from among these is the so-called Yuga Purāṇa,\textsuperscript{26} which describes preceding events in the form of a prophecy. It does so in great detail, and in this respect it is quite unique in early India.\textsuperscript{27} It mentions the Greeks (yavana) and the Scythians (śaka) and the war and destruction these invaders will bring. Most interesting from our present perspective is that it views these disasters as indicators of the approaching end of an era, of a Yuga. The Yuga Purāṇa elaborates this notion by distinguishing between four Yugas that succeed each other, each succeeding one worse than the one that precedes it.\textsuperscript{28} The invasions of the Greeks and the Scythians announce the end of the last of these four Yugas, the Kali-Yuga. The text concludes with an indication that a new series of four Yugas will begin soon.\textsuperscript{29}

It seems clear that the author(s) of the Yuga Purāṇa really believed that the end of the Kali-Yuga was at hand.\textsuperscript{30} He (or they) thought it would take place soon after the invasions of the Śakas, and this must therefore be the time when the text was composed.\textsuperscript{31}

\textsuperscript{25} On the turbulent political history of the Indo-Greeks and their link with Bactria, see Sidky 2000: 181 ff.
\textsuperscript{26} The Yuga Purāṇa is really part of a longer work called Gārgīya-jyotiṣa (and other names; see Mitchiner 2002: 1 f.). Another part of this work is studied in Kenneth G. Zysk's The Indian System of Human Marks (2015).
\textsuperscript{27} Parashier 1991: 239. This may also be one of the earliest Brahmanical texts that present a cyclical view of time, a feature borrowed from outside; see Greater Magadha p. 69 f.
\textsuperscript{28} The idea that there is a beginning and a violent end to our world fits in with what Witzel (2012) calls Laurasian mythology; even the notion of the Four Ages is Laurasian according to him (p. 86 ff.). The idea of an eternal world without beginning and without end, to be considered in Part II, does not find a place in Laurasian mythology, and looks more like an intellectual construct.
\textsuperscript{29} This circumstance allows us to use the expression 'millenarianism' here (see Thapar 2000). Note however that Christian millennialism "describes the hope for a final 'Golden Age' to come before the end" (McGinn 2002: 136; emphasis added), and does not therefore apply here. The term 'millenarianism' can no longer be appropriately applied to the classical Purānic vision of history, which we will consider below.
\textsuperscript{31} Second half of the first century BCE, according to Mitchiner (2002: 93). Interestingly, the Vikrama era, which begins "in the autumn of year 58/57 or in spring 57/56 BCE", is called kṛta in early inscriptions; its first inscriptive occurrence dates from 239 CE (D. R. Bhandarkar in Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum vol. III, revised edition, pp. 187 ff.; Falk 2012: 131). Kṛta is, of course, also the name of the first of the four Yugas, and therefore of the beginning of a new cycle. Is this coincidence? Indian tradition links this era to a King Vikramādiya who presumably was victorious over the Śakas in that year (Mitchiner 2002: 81 f.; González-Reimann 2002: 99; Witzel 2003: 95-96; Kulke & Rothermund 1998: 72 f.). Understandably, already Bhandarkar (ibid., pp. 197-198) considered the possibility that the Kṛta era might have been thought of as the new Kṛta-Yuga.
Other accounts of the impending end of time have been preserved, as portions of larger texts. The _Mahābhārata_, for example, contains a prophecy about the end of the Kali-Yuga, in the form of a discussion between King Yudhiṣṭhīra and the sage Mārkāṇḍeya. It adds to the list of oppressive ruling dynasties, and one of these (the Ābhīras) appears to justify the conclusion that this prophecy was written, or given its present shape, in 250 CE or later.

This concrete prophecy cannot but be a late addition to the _Mahābhārata_, but clearly earlier portions were very much aware of the notion of the end of the Yuga, for the _yugānta_ is frequently invoked in comparisons. These comparisons give us a clear image of how the end of the Yuga was thought of: "It is a time of great destruction, caused mainly by natural forces: torrential rains, implied by the rolling clouds and the thunder; earthquakes, hinted at by the shaking produced by Arjuna’s conch as well as by the fallen guardians of the quarters; terrible winds …; and an intense, resplendent Sun; but most of all fire, an all-consuming fire that destroys everything. There are also comets or meteors, as well as negative planetary configurations. … In the Epic … this destruction is often associated with the god Rudra (Śiva), who … is said to rage at yogānta." The core _Mahābhārata_ is perhaps roughly contemporaneous with the _Yuga Purāṇa_ (additions were made at least until the prophecy of Mārkāṇḍeya). This strongly suggests that these comparisons with the end of the Yuga were not mere innocent poetic metaphors. They rather compare events in the _Mahābhārata_ with horrors that might arrive to the composers of the text in a not too distant future.

It is therefore hardly surprising that the _Mahābhārata_ contains, in the so-called Āpaddharma-section of its twelfth book, advice for kings as to how to deal with the difficulties accompanying the end of the Yuga. Yudhiṣṭhīra here asks:

> When dharma and the world are in decline in consequence of the yuga coming to an end (yugakṣayāt), and when bandits oppress them [dharma and loka], grandfather, how can one stand firm?

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Surprisingly, R. S. Sharma (1982: 202-203 n. 79; 2001: 62 n. 97), with a reference to Dhrūva 1930, states: "It is argued that the Kali description of the _Yuga Purāṇa_ belongs to c. 50 BC but the Purana seems to have been a work of the third century AD." Dhrūva himself, however, dates the text "to the beginnings of the first century B.C., that is to say, to the first or the second decade thereof" (1930: 45).

32 _Māhībhārata_ 3.186-189. Here, and only here, the _Mahābhārata_ directly describes the end of the Kali-Yuga (using the expression _yugānta_; everywhere else this expression is used in comparisons); González-Reimann 2010: 69; 2002: 64 ff. On some other issues raised in connection with this section, see Bailey 2012.

33 Mitchiner 2002: 46.

34 “This destruction at _yugānta_, which clearly does not refer to the transition between one individual yuga and the next, seems to allude either to an undefined long period of time, or to the end of the cycle of all four yugas (Kṛta, Tretā, Dvāpara and Kali) taken as a whole. The four yugas taken together are commonly referred to as a yuga, what the Purānas would call the mahāyuga, the great yuga, or the caturyuga, the fourfold yuga." (González-Reimann 2002: 71-72)

35 As shown in González-Reimann 2000: 64-73.


37 See, e.g., Hiltebeitel 2001; Fitzgerald 2004.

Clearly, the then following advice is meant to be practical advice. This is only possible if the end of the Yuga was considered near enough to justify receiving advice about it. We now know that this is exactly what the author of this passage appears to have believed.

The approaching end of time may also find expression in the lists of royal dynasties that have been preserved in a number of Purāṇas.39 These lists end in the early years of the Gupta dynasty, and describe in this connection the evils of the end of the Kali age.40 However, the continuing rule of this same dynasty may have convinced Brahmanical authors that time was not yet coming to an end.41

The Brahmanical sources we have so far considered create the impression that the Yugas they talk about, or at any rate the last one, the Kali-Yuga, were thought of in manageable historical terms.42 Indeed, the Māṇava Dharmāsāstra (Manu 1.68-70) gives the four Yugas a length of respectively 4’000, 3’000, 2’000 and 1’000 (human) years.43 The Kali-Yuga, according to later Purāṇas, began at the moment of Kṛṣṇa’s death, i.e. soon after the Mahābhārata war.44 As we have seen, it was expected to come to an end soon after the invasions by Greeks and Šākas according to the Yuga Purāṇa, some centuries later according to other, younger, sources.

Events did not quite follow expectations.45 One reaction, it appears, was to push the end of the Kali-Yuga ahead, while yet holding on to the view that this end was near. When the end still did not come, and when presumably the succession of foreign invasions and other catastrophes had come to an end, an altogether different appreciation of the situation became prevalent. Rather than thinking that the end of the Kali-Yuga was very near, Brahmanical authors now came to think that this Yuga would extend far into the future. This change of perception was based on a number of reflections, among them the following. Time spans were no longer thought of in terms of human years, but rather in terms of divine days, or years, which lasted very much longer than their human equivalents. This made it possible to think of the end of the Kali-Yuga as being far away. The expectation of a speedy transition to a happier Yuga turned out to have been premature.46

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39 Pargiter 1913.
40 Pargiter 1913: 56 (kaliśeṣe); tr. p. 74; Rocher 1986: 116.
41 So Kulke 1979: 106: "Es war m. E. dieser Widerspruch zwischen dem alten, zyklichen Weltbild sich stets verschlechternder Zeiten und dem ‘linearen’ Verlauf der ruhmreichen Geschichte der frühen Gupta-Kaiser, der zum Abbruch der frühen Königsgenealogien führte."
42 Recall at this point that Sphujidhvaja’s Yavanajātaka knows a yuga of 165 years; Mak 2013a: 75.
43 To each of these Yugas a preceding and following twilight must be added, so that it all adds up to 12,000 human years, equal to one single Yuga of the gods (Manu 1.71).
44 González-Reimann 2002: 51; further Thapar 1996: 29; Kane, HistDh III p. 896 ff.
45 Fussman (2012: 26) observes: “The first century A.D. was a time of great turmoil and changes in Northern India. Wars raged between the last Indo-Greeks, the Šākas, the Indo-Parthians and the Kushans till Wima Kadphises, c. A.D. 50, was able to bring some peace. There may have been later local revolts or internal strife, of which no evidence remains, and the rule of the Kushans may have been hard, but at least foreign invasions were stopped for more than two centuries.” We must assume that Kuṣāṇa rule did not quite correspond to brahmanical expectations of the new Krta-Yuga.
46 Note that the question of linearity and circularity of time plays no role in the observations here made. Both the ‘short’ and the subsequent ‘long’ Yuga were part of a cyclic vision of time, but the very length of the ‘long’ Yuga made it more linear than the ‘short’ Yuga: “Where cyclic time takes a spiral form, it can be seen as almost linear when sufficiently stretched” (Thapar 2011:...
If this understanding of the early Brahmanical texts on Yugas is correct, the notion of the Kali-Yuga, when it was first introduced into Brahmanism, had a very concrete historical sense. It had immediate relevance for the present, because the present was thought of as being the end of the Kali-Yuga, an observation that explained the political and social disasters of the time. It was concrete enough to be testable, to use an anachronistic term, and it turned out to be incorrect: the world did not come to an end during the first centuries of the Common Era. The length of the Kali-Yuga was therefore reconsidered, with the result that henceforth Brahmans no longer lived near the end of the Kali-Yuga, far from it: hundreds of thousands of years were to pass before its end would arrive. Disasters and mishaps could no longer be attributed to the end of the Kali-Yuga; instead they were attributed to the Kali-Yuga as such. A short but intense period of catastrophic events that announced the arrival of better times was in this way replaced with a very long period of hundreds of thousands of years characterized by misery and injustice. Texts no longer speak of the end of the Kali-Yuga, but of the Kali-Yuga tout court.\footnote{19} Certainly, general conditions, including most notably social conditions, will go from bad to worse. But this process of deterioration is nowhere near its end.

If our reflections so far are correct, a major change took place in the Brahmanical conception of history.\footnote{20} The earlier conception finds expression in some of the texts considered so far, while the so-called Purāṇas are our main testimony for the updated version. However, the Purāṇas also contain traces of the transition.

Consider the following observations about the presentation of the Yugas in these texts, made by Ludo Rocher in his book The Purāṇas (1986: 124):

One feature that sets the yugas apart from similar systems in other civilizations is that, in India, the world ages have been assigned specific durations. The four yugas extend over periods of 4000, 3000, 2000, and 1000 years. Each of these is preceded by a dawn (saṃdhīyā) and followed by a twilight (saṃdhyāṁśa) equal to one tenth of the duration of the yuga proper. The figures for the yugas which appear most often in the purāṇas are, therefore, 4800, 3600, 2400, and 1200, the caṭuryūga being equal to 12,000 years. More often than not these years are said to be divine years. To convert them into human years they have to be multiplied by 360, i.e. 1,728,000 + 1,296,000 + 864,000 + 432,000 = 4,320,000.

Note the words "more often than not" in "More often than not these years are said to be divine years". Some Purāṇas say no such thing. An example is the Vāyu Purāṇa (see esp. 32.58-65), presumably one of the earliest surviving texts of this kind.\footnote{21} This Purāṇa contains a vivid description of the hardships connected with the end of the Kali-Yuga in chapter 58. This description culminates in the introduction of a destructive ruler called

\footnote{22} Yet ‘historical awareness’ played a far greater role when people believed in the ‘short’ Yuga. Strictly speaking, ‘the Indians did not believe in ‘cyclic time’’, if by that is meant an endless and beginningless recurrence of events. It is true that the narratives recounted in the Purāṇas allude to vast cosmic cycles of repeated creation and dissolution (the kalpas), but these are cycles of change within linear time.” (Perrett 1999: 314).
\footnote{23} See the example of the Viṣṇu Purāṇa, below.
\footnote{24} We will see in a later chapter (§ II.4.2) that these two cyclical conceptions of history (‘short Yugas’ vs. ‘long Yugas’) existed in parallel with a third Brahmanical conception of history, this one linear.
\footnote{25} Rocher 1986: 245. Hazra (1940: 16) proposes 200-275 for the portion on Yugas.
Pramiti who kills countless human beings (primarily foreigners [mleccha]); following this, people start killing each other, and suffer untold miseries. Then, however, the Yuga changes overnight (ahorātṛam ... yugam ... parivartate, 58.101), and a new Kṛta-Yuga comes about (kṛtam avartata, 58.102; pravṛtte ... kṛtayuge, 58.103). An almost identical account is found in Brahmanāda Purāṇa 1.2.31. Nothing prevents us from assuming that these two Purāṇas preserve an understanding of the Yugas that prevailed before their lengths were multiplied by 360, i.e. before their lengths exceeded anything measurable in terms related to ordinary human experience.

Vincent Eltschinger (2012) has drawn attention to the fact that the apocalyptic passages from the Vāyu and Brahmanāda Purāṇas just considered say nothing about foreign invasions, and much about heretical views as harbingers of the end of the Yuga. It seems fair to explain this in chronological and geographical terms. These passages date from a time when Gupta rule had put an end to foreign invasions, and from a region that could feel safe under their protection. The main threat facing Brahmanism was now felt to come from non-Brahmanical religious currents including Buddhism and Jainism.

An example of a Purāṇa that represents the more recent position, in which the Yugas are thought of as being of exceedingly long duration, is the Viṣṇu Purāṇa. Significantly, Viṣṇu Purāṇa 6.1, which repeatedly refers to the Kali age, and a few times to the increase or progress of the Kali age (kaler vrddhi), never refers to its end. This confirms our earlier impression that now the Kali-Yuga as such, and not its end, occupied the minds of the authors concerned. The Brahmanical worries of the Kali-Yuga in the Viṣṇu Purāṇa concern, as once again pointed out by Eltschinger, heretical competitors rather than foreign invaders.

Summing up this chapter, certain Brahmanical texts give expression to the anxiety that those Brahmins felt who were most affected by the post-Maurya invasions. They were convinced that the end of the world was near. When subsequently the situation improved, they abandoned that conviction, and reinterpreted their earlier ideas about the end of time in such a manner that this event was no longer near.

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50 The suggestion has been made that the story of Pramiti was a reflection of historical rulers such as Candragupta II Vikramaditya (r. 375-415) or Yaśodharman of Malvā, who defeated the Hūṇas around 530" (Eltschinger 2012: 55, with references to further literature).
51 Note that the Yugas are, also in the Vāyu Purāṇa, placed in a wider context of Manvantaras and Kalpas, periods of far greater length than the individual Yugas.
52 The terms ‘heretic’ and ‘heretical’ are far from ideal in this context. For a discussion, see Doniger O’Flaherty 1983.
53 Viṣṇu Purāṇa 1.3.11 and 6.1.5 state in so many words that 12‘000 divine years constitute a caturyuga. See in general Brinkhaus 2007.
55 Eltschinger (2012) points out that the Brahmanical Yugas did end up finding their way into certain Buddhist texts. A particularly interesting example is the tenth chapter (saṅghātaka) of the Lankāvatārasūtra, which must have been added to the text between its first translation into Chinese in 443 and the second one in 513. Unfortunately the information about Yugas is full of contradictions: there are no Buddhas in the Kali-Yuga (v. 804); Śākyamuni lived in the Kali-Yuga (v. 794); long after Śākyamuni, the Kali-Yuga will begin (v. 784-786); Buddhism will disappear at the end of the Kali-Yuga (v. 786). V. 786 informs us that the Kali-Yuga will come after the Mauryas, the Nandas, the Guptas and then some unspecified foreigners (mleccha), i.e., presumably at the time these verses were added to the text. If that was the beginning of the Kali-Yuga, one wonders what would be its end. The text provides no answer.
I.1.3. Brahmins in Gandhāra

After all the catastrophes that had befallen northwestern Brahmins, did any remain in those regions? The question will here be taken up with special reference to Gandhāra. We will see that those researchers who maintain that there were Brahmins in Gandhāra during the early centuries of the Common Era base their opinions on a debatable interpretation of the evidence. There are, on the other hand, textual passages that indicate that Gandhāra was out of bounds for Brahmins. Two recent publications by prominent scholars state in so many words that there were Brahmins in Gandhāra during that period, one by Giovanni Verardi, the other by Gérard Fussman.

Verardi’s article (2011) deals specifically with northwestern India and eastern Afghanistan. Verardi argues in favour of reintroducing what he calls “the third actor of the play, i.e. Brahmanical power”. He is of the opinion that there is a sufficient amount of evidence regarding a presence of Bhāgavatas and Pāṣupatas in the Northwest to reappraise the history of the region, especially from the sixth century CE onward. This observation, as long as it concerns the period from the sixth century onward, is in conformity with our textual sources. Indeed, Kalhaṇa’s Rājatarāṅgini (1.307), a text composed in the twelfth century, states in so many words that there are Brahmins in Gandhāra; it looks down upon them for accepting agrahāras from a worthless king, but in so doing confirms their presence. Most of Verardi’s article concerns this more recent period.

However, Verardi also draws conclusions about an earlier time, so let us consider the evidence on which he bases these. About the Bhāgavatas he says (p. 149):

For the Bhāgavatas, we go back as early as the images of Kuṭṭā and Samkarṣaṇa on the drachm minted by Agathocles of Bactria, who also ruled on Gandhāra and Taxila, and to the Indo-Greek king of Taxila Antialkidas, either a Bhāgavata himself or close to Bhāgavata circles. Gandhāran images of Viṣṇu datable to the second or third century are rare, but a seal of the fourth-fifth century AD executed according to the more Hellenised tendency of Gandhāran art shows a

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56 Evidence for a Brahmanical presence in this later but still pre-Muslim period comes from statues and literary sources; Kuwayama 1976; 1999; see further Meister 2010. At the time of the Arab conquest there were also Brahmins in Sindh. As Maclean (1989: 13) points out, a native of Brahmanābād stated the following at the time of the Arab conquest: “The prosperity of this country is due to the Brahmins (barāhimah). They are our scholars (‘ulamā’) and sages (ḥukamā’). All our important rituals — from marriage to mourning — are performed through their mediation.” Maclean (ibid.; with detailed references) further observes that “the Chachnāmah [refers] to Brahmin priestcraft, … the veneration of the cow, Brahmanical rituals such as cremation, and caste related concerns for purity and pollution.”

57 Footnote 10: See the find analysed by Filliozat (1973) and Guillaume (1991: 81 ff.).

58 Footnote 11: See the famous inscription on the Besnagar Garuda pillar erected by his ambassador Heliodorena bhāgavatena at the court of Vidiśā (Sircar 1965: 88-89, v. 2-3).

59 Footnote 12: See for instance the small Viṣṇu image seen at the Christie’s Sale 2195 (Indian and Southeast Asian Art) of 16 September 2009, New York.
four-armed Viṣṇu to whom a ruler in Central-Asian dress and half his size pays homage …

About Śivaism he writes (p. 150-151):

For what we call Sivaism, the evidence is more abundant. An early (1st–2nd century AD) object like the ritual vessel published by Giuseppe Tucci [1968] points to a still unexplored cultural and religious horizon and raises major questions … . There are the well-known Kuśāṇa coins with Oešo/Śiva standing near the bull and bearing trident and lazo,62 and the profession of faith of at least one Kuśāṇa king,62 as well as early Śiva icons.63 We should also carefully consider the reason why in the Mahābhārata Śiva is called ‘the God from Gandhāra’.64 An early schist image of Mahiśamardini comes from the site of Muhammad Zai near Peshawar,65 and Śivaite penetration goes as far as Sūrk Kotal in Bactria/Tokhāristān.66 The latter was a traditionally rich agricultural region and was, in my opinion, the ultimate target of Brahmanical expansion and the reason of Brahmanical pressure on K[ā]piš[i]. … The relative invisibility of Bhāgavatas and Pāśupatas in early Gandhāra depends on their taking root in rural areas (especially the groups of Pāśupatas) and on the fact that the trading class — an object of scorn for the authors of the early Kali Age literature — did not find representation among them.

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61 The tendency to identify Kuśāṇa deities with Brahmanical deities is widespread. So in the following passage: “OHPO is the only Brahmanic god occurring on Kaniska’s coinage as frequently as Iranian deities.” (Lo Muzio 1996: 163)
62 Footnote 17: Oešo was particularly popular with Vima Kadphises, who declares himself a devotee of Sarvalokeśvara, and with Vāsudeva I, as appears from Göbl (1984: 72-74; pls. 28 ff.). In ibid.: 43-44, the reader will find the typology. On Oešo/Śiva see Cribb (1997: 17-18), Gail (1992) and Lo Muzio (1996); Pal (1988) has understood very well the need for the Kuśāṇas to be legitimised in their Indian territories. An altogether different line of research is that of Tanabe (1992). On the extent of the involvement of the Kuśāṇa dynasty with Śivaism, see the nature of the Māt sanctuary (Lüders 1961: 138 ff.) as well as the evidence from Sūrk Kotal (Fussman in Schlumberger, Le Berre and Fussman 1983: 149-50, 152).
64 Footnote 19: Cf. Tucci (1963: esp. 159). [Observation added by JB: Note that Tucci refers here to the Śivasahasranāma that is not included in the critical edition of the Mahābhārata.]
66 Footnote 21: More than one hundred graffiti depicting the triśāṇa are incised along the monumental access to the upper terrace of the sanctuary (on this and other evidence, see Fussman in Schlumberger, Le Berre and Fussman 1983: 149-50, 152), but an assessment of the evidence remains difficult because of the little stratigraphic attention paid to the late phases of the site and to the phases of abandonment … . Not all the evidence brought forward in Transoxiana points to a Kuśāṇa or post-Kuśāṇa horizon, as for instance the Umāmahēśvara painting from Dilberjin Tepe (Kruglikova 1974: 44 ff.), which can hardly be earlier than the sixth century. Images of Śiva and Pārvatī are known from relatively early times, but the iconography of Umāmahēśvara is post-Gupta (the earliest known example comes from Nepal; Pal 1974: pls. 128, 129). It is true that the Dilberjin specimen, displaying the divine couple seated on a huge Nandin, sets a model of its own.
Verardi’s claims as to the presence of Brahmanical power might not be controversial but for the fact that a number of our textual sources present an altogether different picture. Consider the following.⁶⁷

Brahmanical texts from the period suggest the absence, or at best weak presence, of Vedic Brahmanism in the Northwest. A number of these (Patañjali’s *Mahābhāṣya* on P. 2.4.10, vol. I p. 475; on P. 6.3.109, vol. III p. 174, cp. Deshpande 1993: 96 ff.; *Baudhāyana Dharmaśāstra* 1.2.9-17; *Vasiṣṭha Dharmaśāstra* 1.8-16) describe the extent of the ‘land of the Āryas’ (*āryāvarta*). For its western limit they use a somewhat obscure expression, often translated as the place “where the Sarasvatī disappears”.⁶⁸ This place is situated in the Thar Desert that today separates the territories of India and Pakistan. Patañjali adds an interesting remark. Composing his *Mahābhāṣya* toward the end of the second century BCE,⁶⁹ he specifies, in the midst of a technical grammatical discussion, that the Śakas and the Yavanas live outside this territory. Since Patañjali’s Yavanas are the Indo-Greeks and his Śakas the Indo-Scythians, both of whom established themselves in succession in Gandhāra and Panjab roughly at his time (the Indo-Greeks certainly already before him), their mention confirms our suspicion that the western limit of Brahmanism at his time was perhaps situated somewhere near the present border between India and Pakistan, excluding Gandhāra from the territory that Patañjali had in mind. We should however not be hasty in concluding that all Brahmins at the time lived in the ‘land of the Āryas’ (*āryāvarta*). As a matter of fact, there are reasons to believe that Patañjali himself wrote his *Mahābhāṣya* in Kashmir.⁷⁰ This would mean that one of the most important texts of classical Brahmanism was composed outside the ‘land of the Āryas’. Clearly there were Brahmins who lived outside this core region. The fact that the Śakas and the Yavanas lived outside this region does not therefore by itself exclude the possibility that there were Brahmins in their region.

However, both the *Anuśāsanaparvan* of the *Mahābhārata*⁷¹ and the *Mānava Dharmaśāstra*⁷² state that no Brahmins are seen among the Yavanas, the Śakas and the Kāmbojas.

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⁶⁸ For a discussion of the obscure reading prāg ādarśāt, see Olivelle 2000: 571, note 2.9. Manu’s extension of Brahmanical territory until the western sea does not necessarily include Gandhāra.

⁶⁹ For Patañjali’s date, see § I.2.1, below.

⁷⁰ See § I.2.1, below.

⁷¹ Mhbh 13.33.19-21: “Those various men of Ksatriya birth — Šakas, Yavanas, and Kāmbojās — have reached the level of Šūdras because no Brahmāns are seen among them. Those various men of Kṣatriya birth — Dramīlas, Kaliṅgas, Pulindas, Uśīnaras, Kaulas, Śarpas, and Māhiśakas — have reached the level of Šūdras because no Brahmāns are seen among them.” (śakā yavanakāmbojas tās tāh kṣatriyajātayah/ vrṣalatvam parigatā brāhmaṇānām adārasanāt// dramilāś ca kaliṅgās ca pulinḍās čāy uśīnarāḥ/ kauḷāḥ sarpā māhiśakās tās tāh kṣatriyajātayah/ vrṣalatvam parigatā brāhmaṇānām adārasanāt//. Similarly Mhbh 13.35.17-18: mekalā dramidāḥ kāsāh paundrāḥ kollagārās tathā/ śaundikā daradā darvās caurāḥ śabarabarāḥ// kirātā yavannāḥ caiva tās tāh kṣatriyajātayah/ vrṣalatvam anuprāptā brāhmaṇānām adārasanāt//.)

⁷² Manu 10.43-44: “By neglecting rites and because no Brahmāns are seen among them, these men of Kṣatriya birth have gradually reached in the world the level of Šūdras — Pundrākas, Codas, Dravidas, Kāmbojās, Yavanas, Śakas, Pāradas, Pahlavas, Cīnas, Kirātās, and Daradas.” (*saṇakais tu kriyālopād imāḥ kṣatriyajātayaḥ/ vrṣalatvam gataḥ loke brāhmaṇādārasanāna ca// pundrakāś codadrvidāḥ kāmbojā yavanāḥ śakāḥ// pāradāḥ pahvalāś cīnāḥ kirātā daradās tathā//; tr. Olivelle, modified.)
Other texts must be considered as well. The Assalāyana Sutta of the Majjhima Nikāya (MN II p. 149) states that the four varnas do not exist among the Yonas and the Kāmbojas; and an inscription of Aśoka claims that there are no Brahmans and Śramanas among the Yonas.\(^73\) It is hard to determine whether these testimonies are relevant for Gandhāra. Under Maurya rule, there may have been few, if any, Greeks (Yonas) in Gandhāra, so that these testimonies may primarily concern regions like Bactria, where a strong Greek presence remained, and Kandahar, where the language of Aśoka's inscriptions is Greek, presumably because of a strong Greek presence there. After the collapse of the Maurya Empire, the Greeks were back in Gandhāra, but clearly Aśoka's inscription cannot refer to these. And the date of composition, or of the final redaction, of the Assalāyana Sutta is too uncertain to allow us to determine what exactly it is talking about.\(^74\)

Then there are the following Brahmanical texts. The Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa (9.3.1.24) speaks in very negative terms about the inhabitant of the region of the seven rivers that flow westward, i.e. the Panjāb.\(^75\) The Baudhāyana Śrautasūtra enumerates the names of tribes that a good Brahmin should not visit, among them the Āraṭtas and the Gandhāras in the Northwest.\(^76\) It is not clear where exactly the Āraṭtas lived;\(^77\) the Gandhāras, on the other hand, evidently lived in Gandhāra, a region that by this testimony was situated outside the realm where orthodox Brahmans lived at that time.\(^78\) The correct understanding of these passages depends, once again, on chronological considerations that cannot be taken up here.

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\(^{73}\) For a detailed discussion of this inscription, see Appendix I, below.

\(^{74}\) The question whether this reference to the Yonas implies that this part of the Sutta was composed after Alexander divides scholars. \textit{A priori} this seems plausible to me, but others disagree; see Analayo 2011: 551-552, with note 116 and references; 2012: 245-246.


\(^{76}\) BaudhŚŚ 18.13; cp. Witzel 1987: 202. The Kevaddha Sutta of the Buddhist canon in Pali (DN I p. 213) speaks of a ‘science from Gandhāra’ (gandhārī nāma vijjā; cp. the gāndhārī nāma vidyā of Abhidh-k-bh(P) p. 424 l. 18, under verse 7.47), which enables its possessors to multiply themselves, and other such things. Note that Tucci (1963: 147 f.) interprets gāndhārī vidyā differently: “a magical formula connected with or placed under the control of Gāndhārī [the Devī from Gandhāra]%”.

\(^{77}\) BaudhŚŚ 18.44 suggests that Gandhāra and the land of the Ā/Araṭta were separate from each other. Witzel (1989: 235) translates this passage: “Āyu went eastward. His (people) are the Kuru-Paścāla and the Kāśi-Videha. This is the Āyava migration. (His other people) stayed at home in the West. His people are the Gāndhārī, Paśū and Araṭta. This is the Amāvasaya (group).”

Cardona & Jain (2003: 33 sq.) propose a different translation: “Āyu went eastward. Of him there are these: the Kuru-Paścālas, the Kāśi-Videhas. This is the going forth of Āyu. Amāvasa (went) westward. Of him there are these: the Gāndhāris, the Sparṣa, and the Arāṭtas. This is the (going forth) of Amāvasa.” Similarly Brucker (1980: 92): “Nach Osten brach Āyu auf. Dessen (Nachkommen sind) diese (heutigen) Kuru-Paścāla, Kāśi-Videha: das ist die Gruppe, die unter Āyu aufbrach. Nach Westen brach Amāvasa auf. Dessen (Nachkommen sind) diese (heutigen) Gāndhāri, Sparṣa, Arāṭta: das ist die Gruppe, die unter Amāvasa aufbrach.”

\(^{78}\) Brucker (1980: 147) states: “mit Gandhāra [begegnet uns] ein Land, das sicher schon sehr früh Kontakt mit den in Nordindien eindringenden Indern hatte. Um so erstaunlicher ist es, dass dieses Gebiet, das am Oberlauf von Sindhu und Vitasta zu lokalisieren ist, selbst in der Sūtrazeit noch nicht in die arische Siedlungsgemeinschaft inkorporiert war.” The ‘noch nicht’ of this passage suggests that Brucker believes that Gandhāra was subsequently incorporated in the area of Aryan colonization; he does not however provide any evidence to support this.
It appears that Brahmanism at the time of Patañjali and perhaps already before him spread mainly eastward and southward, starting from the ‘land of the Āryas’. This impression is confirmed by recent research about Vedic schools. These schools migrated toward the east and the south, or even the North (Kashmir, Nepal), but it seems they never returned to the Northwest. Several late-Vedic texts know Gandhāra as a more or less remote region, and none of the Vedic schools appear to be found there. The regions to the west of those inhabited by Vedic Brahmans are home to the despised Bāhikas, literally outsiders. The term bāhika is often confused with bāhlīka or bāhlīka, which designates the inhabitants of Bactria. The inhabitants of Gandhāra are depicted in the Mahābhārata as being beyond the system of varnas, like fishermen.

The western boundary of India appears to have become, and remained for some time, the river Indus. And indeed, Arrian’s Indica clearly distinguishes between regions east of the Indus and those to the west of it.

Finally some observations — made by Witzel (2006: 485) — about the Mahābhārata:

Especially the treatment of the northwest is very interesting. The ‘bald’ (clean-shaven) Greeks of the Bactrian and the Panjab Greek kingdoms are frequently combined with other barbarians (mleccha). On the other hand, they are somewhat surprisingly called ‘all-knowing’. But, they do not have a ‘proper’ social order with four classes but only two, free men and slaves. They drink alcohol, eat, dress, etc.

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79 Bodewitz (2002: 222) speaks of the ‘Veda Belt’.
81 See Witzel 1994: esp. p. 259 ff., on the immigration of Brahmins into Kashmir, initially mainly from the centre of Manu’s Āryadeśa. Patañjali himself may have been an immigrant in Kashmir; see § 1.2.1, below.
82 Witzel (1981: 116 n. 25) wonders, without proof, whether there have been ‘missionaries’ who travelled toward the Northwest to spread their ideas about ritual. The issue whether Brahmanism spread through missionaries who preached their views about ritual can be questioned.
83 The Yajurveda-Vrkṣa mentions several schools that were supposedly situated yavanadeṣe. Witzel (1982: 192), who provides this information, points out that the dates of composition of the different versions of this text remain unknown. He suggests that the text here speaks of the Greek Panjab, or of regions in Sindh, later also in Panjab, that were occupied at an early date by the Moslems.
84 Witzel (1987: 202 n. 100) thinks that Bāhīka is a kind of nickname for peoples whose real names were Āratta and Madra. See further Witzel 1989: 128, with notes 66 and 67.
85 MW p. 730 s.v. bāhīka.
86 E.g., Mhkb 12.65.13 ff.; 200.40-41.
and marry in improper ways. They inhabit an area that one should not go to, which echoes Bodhāyana’s and Manu’s concerns … However, all of the Panjāb was seen, already in the later Veda ([ŚPaBr] 9.3.1.24), as an area of ruffians and barbarians whom one should avoid.

The claimed absence of varṇas or of Brahmans in the northwestern regions (those primarily inhabited by Yavanas [yona], Kāmbojas and Śakas) is significant; after all, the varṇa system of society can be looked upon as a core feature of Brahmanism. The absence of varṇas in a region is almost by definition an indication that Brahmanism does not prevail there. It does not, of course, exclude the possibility that individual Brahmans live in that region, for the mere presence of Brahmans does not guarantee the prevalence of Brahmanism as a system. However, the negative remarks about Gandhāra in certain Brahmanical texts, and the prohibition for good Brahmans to visit it, can be read as strong indicators of a weak presence, or even total absence, of Brahmans. All in all, our Brahmanical textual sources allow us to believe that there were, or only few, Brahmans in and around Gandhāra during the centuries just before and after the beginning of the Common Era. So how do we make sense of Verardi’s evidence?

Before turning to this question, let us try to be clear what we are talking about. In the course of time Brahmanism came to absorb numerous religious cults, adopting in the process gods such as Kṛṣṇa and Śiva. These religious cults came to be added to a core ideology that could and also did exist without these cults. The core ideology of Brahmanism is of a socio-political nature; it is a vision in which Brahmans are at the apex of society, and society as a whole is primarily classified into four caste-classes, varṇas. Details of this socio-political vision are presented in the classical treatises on Dharma. The worship of particular gods is not part of it. Indeed, certain Brahmans, though committed to Brahmanism as such, rejected the very existence of gods. Examples are classical Mīmāṁsā (of Śabara) and Lokāyata.

It is true that specific religious cults did come to be incorporated into Brahmanism. But these cults were, more often than not, extraneous to its core ideology. Many of these existed before they became part of Brahmanism and independently of it. And once a limited number of deities had found entrance into Brahmanism (e.g. Śiva and Viṣṇu), subsequently encountered deities could be identified with them. To quote Axel Michaels (2004: 39): “Brahman priests explain the pastoral divinities of local cults as manifestations of their respective supreme deity and thus accept them into the Vedic-Brahmanic, and now Hindu pantheon.” It is often difficult to find out details about these non-Brahmanical cults, for most of our textual sources are Brahmanical and loath to concede that they had taken over anything whatsoever from outside. But even without specific details, the general picture is beyond serious doubt.

In an important sense, Verardi is aware of the originally extraneous nature of several religious cults before their incorporation into Brahmanism. He expresses it clearly in another publication that came out in 2011, his book Hardships and Downfall of Buddhism in India. We read here, for example (2011a: 104): “The opponents of the Bhāgavatas pretended image-worshippers not to be brāhmaṇas and [to] be non-Vedic, and the conflict between the two parties was to be a long one. To the vaidika-s, the idea

88 In more recent times claims have been made that of the four caste-classes only two remained: Brahmans and Śūdras; see e.g. Deshpande 2010.
89 See Greater Magadha p. 137-160 (§ IIB)
that the divine could be expressed anthropomorphically was a Greek, mleccha idea."\textsuperscript{90} About the Śaivas he says here (2011a: 105): “The Pāśupatas, or some of the groups which bore this name, were ostracised by the vaidika brāhmaṇas to an even greater extent than the Bhāgavatas … The uncritical endorsement of the majority of scholars of the alleged continuity of Śiva with Vedic Rudra, searched for and built up to obtain credit in orthodox circles, is an obstacle to understanding the upsetting rise of the God-ascetic …” And again (p. 141-142): “The Pāśupatas, or at least some of the groups known by this name, became part of the neo-Brahmanical synthesis in early Gupta time, and perhaps even before, after Lakulīśa’s reform (Lakulīśa was a brāhmaṇa) …” On p. 107 he states: “why did the Buddhists continue to be branded as pāṣaṇḍa-s until the end, while the Bhāgavatas and Pāśupatas did not? The doctrines propounded by the theistic movements were as distant from Vedic orthodoxy as Buddhist doctrines. Could there be anything more extraneous to Vedic doctrine and praxis than the worship of the linga? Yet the Pāśupatas found their place in the Brahmanical system, ultimately governed by the vaidika brāhmaṇas …”

All this raises important questions. If we find evidence for the cult of Kṛṣṇa or Śiva in early Gandhāra, does this justify the conclusion that this region was brahmanized, or even that there were Brahmans in it? Even if we do not contest the interpretations given to coins and statues, it is vital to remember that proof of a Brahmanical presence passes, not through pictures of Kṛṣṇa and Śiva, but through the presence of the core vision of Brahmanism. Most centrally, absence of varṇas means absence of Brahmanism, whatever the gods that were worshiped.\textsuperscript{91}

A recent book by Richard D. Mann, called \textit{The Rise of Mahāśēna} (2012), constitutes a good point of departure for a discussion of the Brahmanical adoption of originally non-Brahmanical deities. Mann shows in detail how the god Mahāśēna — also known by other names, such as Skanda and Kārttikeya — was brahmanized during the period from the Kuśāṇas to the Guptas: from a popular and protective household deity he became a Brahmanical heavenly god, son of Śiva and general of the gods.\textsuperscript{92}

A recent article by Restelli (2012) focuses on the buffalo-killing goddess Mahiśamardini and observes (p. 21) that “the indigenous cult of this goddess, to whom sacrifices were supposedly dedicated, was originally to be found predominantly at a popular level”. She further shows that the iconography of this goddess underwent the impact of a goddess of Near Eastern origin, Nana.\textsuperscript{93}

With regard to Śiva, I will merely cite Tucci (1963: 161; without the references): “Śiva, before becoming one of the foremost and then — at least in wide circles of believers — the foremost God, was one of the folk deities, laukika devatā, and a sect of

\textsuperscript{90} Image-worship enters into Brahmanical orthodox literature with much hesitation; see Granoff 2004.
\textsuperscript{91} For a short survey of “Hindu deities in Gandharan art”, see Śrinivasan 2008. Regarding the "Seals, Sealings and Tokens from Gandhāra” described by Rahman & Falk in their eponymous book (2011), the authors observe: "On the whole it is remarkable how few seal[s] from outside the Kashmir Smast display a śāiva background." and: "In the private context of personal seals, Viṣṇu is rather conspicuous by his absence." (p. 21)
\textsuperscript{92} See further Ferrier 2014. On the fusion of ‘local’ and traditional Vedic gods in Mathurā, see Schmid 2010, esp. chapter 3.
\textsuperscript{93} Lubin (2005: 97) states quite generally: “brahmans were installed as priests in the new royal temples, where by composing māhāmyas and sthala purāṇas they helped assimilate the local (often tribal) deity to pan-Indian Sanskrit mythological and cultic norms."
his devotees must have soon acquired a certain notoriety if Patañjali already mentions the Śivabhāgavata-s. One of his first and preeminent characters was his being a village deity ..., the god of shepherds or cowherds: he is connected with cow, buffalo, sheep in the *Aitgavijñā* which is, at least in its bulk, a very old book containing much which may go back to the Kushana times as the editors suggest; as a cowherds god Śiva is long-lived and as such he survives in mediaeval Bengal.” Whatever the details,¹⁴ we must agree that Śiva, too, was originally a non-Brahmanical god who subsequently came to be brahmanized. In other words, identifiable depictions of Śiva are no guarantee for a presence of Brahmanism.¹⁵

It is also noteworthy that the putatively Brahmanical god Śiva is referred to by the presumably non-Brahmanical name of Oesho (OHDO) on Kuśâna coins.¹⁶ Sanderson (2006: 1) points out that there is nothing in the early evidence that enables us to define the worshippers it indicates as belonging or not belonging to one or other of the traditions known from Śaiva scriptural and commentatorial sources. Sanderson further draws attention to the rivalry between Śaivism and Brahmanism, which “denied the validity of any religious practice that was undertaken on the authority of texts lying outside the Brahmanical scriptural corpus ... The Śaiva theoreticians, for their part, made no claim that their scriptures were valid by the criterion of Brahmanism. They insisted rather both on their independent validity and on their superiority to the scriptures to Brahmanism.” (p. 6). Sanderson concludes: “It might appear, then, that Śaivism was as much distinct from, and opposed to, Brahmanism as Buddhism and Jainism were.”¹⁷ Elsewhere (2013: 221-222) he states: "it has been maintained that we have abundant proof of recognition of the importance of Śaivism from as early as the late second century BC on coin issues of the foreigners who ruled parts of northern India during this period, namely the Indo-Greeks, Indo-Scythians, Indo-Parthians, and Kushans. But it is clear that what we have here is an *interpretatio indica* of non-Indian deities, Hellenistic and Iranian, features of whose iconography were incorporated in the development of that of Śiva during this period."

With regard to Kṛṣṇa we can be brief. Herbert Härtel (1987) and Doris Srinivasan (1997) have proposed the thesis of "a ‘gradual deification’ of Kṛṣṇa from a clan hero to the god and then the ‘highest god’ that we find in the Bhagavadgītā". Indeed, Lamotte (1929) looks upon the Bhagavadgītā as a result of brahmanizing Kṛṣṇaism. Angelika

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¹⁴ Tucci (1963: 163) concludes: “We can ... safely assume that the Devī and Śiva in whatever shape and symbols were worshipped in Gandhāra and neighbouring countries, even if they had peculiar names; they might have been worshipped as Yakṣa, as naivāsika or laukika or grāma godlings and gods; but their presence there is certain.” Note further that "Bhava, an alter ego of the Vedic Rudra, ... has been found as a venerated deity in Gandhara not too long after Alexander” (Falk 2013: 65, with a reference to Falk 2009).

¹⁵ Cf. Zeymal 1997: 255-256: “one should bear in mind that the early iconographic symbolism of the Kushan period that is traceable in the medieval iconography of Shiva could have been fundamentally re-interpreted in the interim: when later religious schools of moderate Shaivites began to draw closer to Vedic Hinduism ..., this process was accompanied not just by a smoothing over of the most acute contradictions, but also by a reinterpretation of many myths and iconographic characteristics of purely Shaivite origin.”


¹⁷ He then continues: “However, its approach to Brahmanical authority was of a very different, more accommodating kind.”
Malinar (2007: 252 ff.), moreover, presents evidence testifying to the worship of this god during the centuries preceding the Common Era.\footnote{See further Schmid 2010; Hardy 1983: 29 ff.}

Note that the iconographic and epigraphical evidence indicates that the cult of those gods who became absorbed into Brahmanism was not strong at the time of the Kuśānas, even though orthodox Brahmanical institutions, most notably the Vedic sacrifice, were popular.\footnote{It is further “a well-known fact that the images of the divinity found in North West India differ from the contemporary depictions of Śiva from Mathurā or other sites in the subcontinent, and that one of the main reasons for such differences lies precisely in the presence or absence of the triśāla. This attribute, destined to become one of the essential features in depictions of the divinity and a symbol on which rest speculations of a philosophical and ritual nature elaborated in the Middle Ages, appears to have been an exclusive prerogative of the icons developing in the North West during the formative phase of Śaiva iconography. On the other hand in Mathurā, which could boast important Śaiva sculptural production, images of Śiva were never characterized by the triśāla before the Gupta period.” Giuliano 2004: 52, with a reference to Kreisel 1986: 215-216, Abb. 70.} Verardi, who tends to look upon those gods as evidence of a Brahmanical presence, as we have seen, admits this in the following passage (2011a: 106-107):

we see that in many Indian regions the rulers followed the same policy of the Śuṅgas and Kanvas, opposing both Buddhism and Kuśāna rule, only occasionally supporting the theistic brāhmaṇas. The number of kings who performed the great Vedic rituals, including the horse sacrifice, is astonishing. The Bhārāśivas performed ten aśvamedha-s, Haritīputra Pravarasena I, in the Deccan, performed four, assuming the title of samrāj, and an aśvamedha was also performed in the third century by Cāṃṭāmula I of the Ikṣvāku dynasty, who claimed descent from the mythical Ikṣvākus of Ayodhyā. The lack of artistic patronage at the élite level with regard to the theistic movements in the territories controlled by these dynasties (an exception is Cāṃṭāmula I) indicates the strength of orthodox brāhmaṇas, who … drained all royal resources. Once the conditions created by Kuśāna rule dissolved, and the imposing building activity and impressive amount of artistic output in key-cities like Mathurā and in Buddhist sanctuaries came to a halt, India, besides being de-urbanised, appeared as an iconic desert.

Verardi has the following to say about the time when theistic movements were adopted into Brahmanism (2011a: 157):

[I]n the Mahābhārata, not only the Bhāgavatas, but also the Pāṣupatas have become part of the new Brahmanical tradition born out of the compromise between the theistic movements and the orthodox. The caves of Udayagiri near Vidiśā, owing to the fact that they date to about AD 400 (the inscription of AD 401 is outside Cave 6), are even better evidence. … About the same time an image of Hari-Hara, also from central India, testifies to the compromise between the two great theistic systems. Thus the grafting of the theistic religions onto the Vedic tradition, besides producing works like the Rāmāyaṇa, a large part of the Mahābhārata and the early Purāṇas, was now able to create iconography of great emotional impact and the related rituals.
This and other passages in Verardi’s book suggest that he looks upon the compromise between the two great theistic movements visible in art as evidence for their absorption into Brahmanism. If we accept this conclusion (I do not know how convincing it is), we have regional evidence dating from about 400 CE. The Mahābhārata and the Rāmāyana, too, provide at best evidence for the acceptance of the gods concerned by the Brahmins who composed these works, and no evidence whatsoever about the possible continued independent existence of these gods outside Brahmanism. In other words, the iconic representations of Viṣṇu or Śiva in certain regions during the rule of the Kuśāṇas tell us little, if anything, about the presence of Brahmanism in those regions.

Recall at this point that we must distinguish between a presence of Brahmins and the prevalence of Brahmanism. Brahmins can be present in a region without succeeding in imposing their specific vision of society. An example is the region where the Buddha preached. According to the early Buddhist texts, he met many Brahmins. However, the Brahmanical vision of society did not prevail, and the four varṇas come up almost exclusively in discussions with Brahmins. Our textual sources suggest that Brahmanism did not prevail in Gandhāra. These sources also discourage Brahmins from going there.

Verardi does not stand alone in believing that there was a Brahmanical presence in Gandhāra during those early centuries. From among others who hold this position, I will consider one, Gérard Fussman, concentrating on the arguments he presents in two publications in particular.

In the more recent publication, Fussman (2012: 19-20) states the following about Gandhāra during the early centuries CE: “There was no clear-cut distinction nor avowed opposition, in the lay people at least, between Hinduism and Buddhism. Most Buddhists, even very devout ones building stūpa-s and monasteries, e.g. the rulers of Oḍi and Apraca, bore non-Buddhist names, most often Hindu (Fussman 1994, 41-42), which means that their sanskāra-s (personal rites) were Hindu, be it only because there is no Buddhist sanskāra. … Senavarma (a non-Buddhist Sanskrit name, probably coined by a Brahman) dedicates parts of the merits he acquired in re-building his ancestor’s stūpa to ‘Brahma Sahampati, Śakra, the Indra of the Gods, the four Great Kings [of the directions], the twenty-eight generals of the yakṣa-s, Hārīti and their followers.’ (Hinüber 2003, 46, 10c). These are the gods whose names appear often in the early Buddhist texts. They are staunch supporters of the Buddha. But they are Hindu, even if they do not bear the usual names of the corresponding deities (Brahma, Indra), even if — excepting Hārīti — they are not the gods most revered in Gandhāra in the early centuries A.D. (Viṣṇu, Śiva, Bhairava, Bhīmā, Śrī). A lay Buddhist (upāsaka) and probably many monks did not see any conflict in revering both the Buddha and Hindu gods.”

The use of the term ‘Hindu’ in this passage should not disturb us, because it is sufficiently vague to allow of various interpretations. The claim that these inhabitants of Gandhāra followed Hindu, i.e. Brahmanical, sanskāras, on the other hand, remains unsubstantiated. Basing this claim on the fact that they bore Hindu names is dubious, given that the Brahmanical rules as to what name should be given to whom are in practice often ignored; this suggests that ‘Hindu’ names do not prove that Brahmins were involved. Gods “whose names appear often in the early Buddhist texts” and who “are staunch supporters of the Buddha” cannot, of course, be adduced as evidence for a
Brahmanical presence. We must conclude that the arguments here presented are not compelling.

In an preceding publication Fussman gives a number of reasons for accepting a Brahmanical presence in Gandhāra and Panjāb during an earlier period, viz., the third century BCE: Indo-Aryan languages are used, the presence of Brahmans is attested by the historians of Alexander, the birth place of Pāṇini is in this region, Taxila is presented by Buddhist texts as one of the great cultural centres of ancient India.101

This time we can agree with Fussman. We have already seen that Gandhāra was a centre of Brahmanical culture when Alexander came to India. But clearly, the presence of Brahmans at the time of and before Alexander tells us little or nothing about their presence three hundred years later. And indeed, the evidence here considered suggests that most of these Brahmans may have left at that time, or perhaps given up their Brahmanical status. Some may have become Buddhists. But one thing seems beyond question: The predominant position of Brahmans in Gandhāra had now been taken by Buddhists. More will be said about this in § III.2.1, below.

Questions remain. What do we make of the Brahmans depicted in Gandharan sculpture? Presumably there are plenty of them. Van Lohuizen-de Leeuw (1972: 32; with a reference to J.-J. Barthoux, Les Fouilles de Hadda, vol. III, Pl. 63, a) makes the following observation: “Hermits and ascetics, whether young or old, are always represented as typical Indian Brahmans wearing the Indian dress or dhoti and shawl, while their hair is arranged in a jaṭāmukta or topknot. They often carry a flask or waterpot and occasionally even their upavīṭa or ritual cord is indicated.” Elsewhere in the same article she states (p. 33): “We can … draw some conclusions from the frescoes discovered in Central Asia and Afghanistan which have been preserved due to the dry climate of these areas. First of all there are the early wall paintings from Miran in which the Indian elements stand out clearly. In the later frescoes from Bamiyan, Kakrak, and Fondukistan these are still obvious, especially at the last site. … Mention may here be made only of the shading of the bodies producing plastic effects, the attitude of the female figures, and such details as the enormous ear-rings, the striped dresses and the upavīṭa running over the lower right arm, a mannerism which can also be found in Indian sculptures of about the same date.”102 Harrison & Luczanits (2011: 84), similarly, speak of a ‘brāhmaṇa type’ that "certainly derives from the iconography of Maitreya, the future Buddha, which was already established shortly after the first Buddha images were made. He is consistently represented with the loosely tied long hair and a flask, both signs of his last rebirth as a brāhmaṇa". On the same page they mention Maitreya, then add: "or

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102 In a footnote Van Lohuizen-de Leeuw refers to J. Hackin, J. Carl and J. Meunié, Diverses recherches archéologiques en Afghanistan (1933-1940), M.D.A.F.A., vol. VIII, Paris, 1959, Figs. 198 and 200; and to Hallade, Pl. XVII on p. 153 and Bussagli, Paintings of Central Asia, p. 41. See further Taddei 1969: 374: "brahmans ... have a place of distinction among the characters that more frequently appear in Gandharan Buddhist reliefs".
perhaps we should say, "the brāhmaṇa type", and: "or the brāhmaṇa-type bodhisattva". On p. 85 they state: "triadic compositions in Gandhāra consistently balance the two bodhisattva types ... the brāhmaṇa- and ksatriya-type bodhisattvas ..." The two types are contrasted on p. 83, where we learn that the brāhmaṇa type bodhisattva has loosely tied-up (but uncovered) hair, whereas a ksatriya type bodhisattva wears a turban.

One might ask how one can be certain that Brahmins are depicted in these sculptures. For example, is the textual knowledge according to which Maitreya will be born as a Brahmin perhaps projected back so as to allow the conclusion that Maitreya must be depicted as a typical Brahmin, thus providing us with a depiction of a 'typical Brahmin' without any direct textual evidence to support it? But how certain can we be that these sculptures represent 'typical Indian Brahmins'? The ritual cord (upavīta) may be a reason for distrust. Patrick Olivelle has pointed out in a recent article (2012) that the sacred thread makes its appearance very late in Brahmanical literature. It is not yet known to the Gṛhyaśūtras and the relatively early Āpastamba and Gauṭama Dharmasūtras, and is mentioned for the first time in the Baudhāyana and Vasiṣṭha Dharmasūtras, around the beginning of the Common Era. Does it make sense to believe that this newly adopted Brahmanical feature found artistic expression in regions as far removed from the Brahmanical heartland as Central Asia and Afghanistan? Must we conclude that there was a Brahmanical presence in those regions merely on the basis of this presumed sacred thread? Is it not possible that others wore a similar thread, and that Brahmins copied their example? Kreisel (1986: 104) draws attention to a sculpture of Rudra whose sacred thread is a snake. Is it possible that the so-called Brahmin ascetics are really Śaiva ascetics who wear a real or symbolic snake over one shoulder? It appears that Oesho is sometimes depicted with a sacred thread on Kuśāṇa coins. What is more, Gandharan Bodhisattvas, too, can wear a single or multi-stranded amulet cord that resembles, or is, a sacred thread. Since I am here out of my depth, I do not wish to push  

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103 Note that the resemblance between Maitreya and the god Brahmā, supposing that this is more than coincidence (see Taddei 1969), does not automatically justify a connection between Maitreya and Brahmins. One might think of the god Brahmā as belonging to a religious substrate on which different religions in northern India, including Buddhism in various phases of its development, draw; if so, this god has no specific connection with Brahmanism. Brahmins, on the other hand, embody Brahmanism, a current that presumably was (originally) more restricted in its geographical distribution. As against this, Taddei (1969: 378) sees a "close link existing between Brahmā and the brahmanic caste, on one side, and the Buddha-to-be on the other".

104 Note however that Gobhila Gṛhyaśūtra 1.2.1.4 and Āpastamba Dharmasūtra 2.4.21.22 mention a thread (sūtra) as a possible substitute for the upper garment; Scharfe 2002: 106-107. Olivelle (2012: 128) observes: "The term yajñopavīta ... does occur in the early literature, but the term there simply means a special way of wearing the upper shawl around the neck and chest."

105 Since the ritual cord is mention in the Taītirīyā Āranyakā (2.1.1; Scharfe 2002: 106), this text too may date in its present form from the beginning of the Common Era, thus confirming Wilhelm Rau's suspicion: "Könnte es [i.e. the Taītirīyā Āranyakā] erst nach dem 2. Jhr. v. Chr. bis zu seiner jetzigen Gestalt verwahrlust sein?" (cited Greater Magadha p. 350).


107 Very few illustrations in Lyons 1957 are said to depict Brahmins, and only one of these (no. 429) is interpreted (by Harald Ingholt) to depict a Brahmin with sacred cord (p. 165).

108 Siudmak 2013: 83.
this point. However, it may be premature and hasty to draw conclusions from this uncertain evidence.\textsuperscript{110} Šiva is also known for his hair-bun (\textit{kaparda}), like the so-called Brahmins. Moreover, even Bodhisattvas have a top hair knot, even though it is, according to Harry Falk (2012a: 496), hidden in a cloth. Are we sure that ascetics with a hair-bun have to be Brahmins?

Another point must be considered. The Buddha himself, according to the early Buddhist scriptures, did frequently meet and discuss with Brahmins. One consequence of this is that, whether or not there were Brahmins in Gandhāra, Brahmins would figure in scenes from the life of the Buddha.\textsuperscript{111} They do figure in scenes depicted in Central Asia in connection with the Buddha, as is a Jaina and even an Ājīvika who play roles in canonical stories.\textsuperscript{112} In other words, a certain number of Brahmins is to be expected in Gandharan art even if there were no Brahmins there. Answering the question whether this accounts for all the Brahmins in Gandharan art of the period close to the beginning of the Common Era, is, once again, beyond my competence.

It is to be kept in mind, of course, that there had been Brahmins in Gandhāra, so the assumption that there were still some around the beginning of the Common Era cannot be totally discarded. It is however good to remember that the evidence in support of such a presence is debatable. But with or without a physical presence of Brahmins, Gandhāra was no longer the centre of Brahmanical culture it had once been. Indeed, it had become a region that Brahmins avoided.

I.1.4. The Vedic tradition reinterpreted

The preceding considerations have led us to believe that the centre of Brahmanism moved eastward, roughly between the time of the invasion of Alexander and the beginning of the Common Era. In concrete terms, this probably meant that Brahmins traveled, or rather fled, away from the western regions where their way of life, and presumably their life itself, was in danger. We will see (§ I.2.1) that this movement eastward was not without exceptions, and that some areas — most notably Kashmir — may have attracted new Brahmins at the time when other Brahmins were on their way eastward. But as a whole, the movement was eastward, and at the end of this turbulent period the centre of Brahmanism had moved several hundred kilometers. The question that must interest us is whether Brahmanism survived these difficult times without important changes. The answer that will be explored in this chapter is that the geographical shift went hand in hand with a renewed interpretation of the tradition, at

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\textsuperscript{110} The situation becomes even more complicated if we take Nathan Michael McGovern's (2013) theory into consideration, according to which the term \textit{brāhmanā} was not exclusively used for Brahmins in the Vedic tradition.

\textsuperscript{111} See, for example, the interpretation of the prince’s horoscope, which is fig. 2 accompanying Kurita 2013: 337.

\textsuperscript{112} This was pointed out by Satomi Hiyama in her presentation at the Workshop "Reading Outside the Lines", held in Munich, 13-15 September 2013. It is of course highly unlikely that there were Jainas or Ājīvikas in the Kucha region, in present-day China. On the Ājīvika depicted in Qizil, see Schmidt 2010: 853-854 (Bild 36). Canonical stories involving Jainas and Ājīvikas are also depicted in Ajanta; see Schlingloff 1994.
least in some respects. One feature will be studied in particular, trying to derive information from the Alexander historians.

When Alexander entered the Indian subcontinent with his army, the region of Gandhāra was heavily brahmanized. This point has already been repeatedly emphasized. Well, the city of Taxila (Takośālā) was situated in Gandhāra. And near Taxila, Alexander met a number of naked ascetics, one of whom — Calanus (in Greek: Kalanos) — subsequently accompanied him back into Persia.

Given the strong Brahmanical presence in the region of Taxila, it is a priori plausible that these ascetics were Brahmanical ascetics. Let us therefore briefly recall what the surviving Indian sources tell us about these. Brahmanism developed a form of asceticism that was connected with its sacrificial rites. Large sacrifices required the sacrificer to be consecrated (dikṣita), and this involved various forms of abstinence. Some householders took it upon themselves to live a consecrated life for long periods of time, sometimes even until the end of their days. This tendency crystallized into the vānaprastha (forest-dweller); some Vedic and para-Vedic texts depict this way of life as belonging to householders (who are then called sālīna, yāyāvara, or cakracara), not as yet as constituting a separate āśrama.

We know that beside vānaprasthas, Brahmanical literature knows another type of ascetic, variously called parivrājī, parivrājaka, sannyāsīn etc. Unlike the vānaprastha, the parivrājaka abandons his sacrificial fire, and thus renounces his sacrificial life. Historically the parivrājaka is not a Vedic ascetic at all: his way of life was borrowed from the eastern region of Greater Magadha, and this ascetic pursued no goal that was in any way connected with the Vedic sacrificial tradition, which rather centred around the sacrificial fire. The juxtaposition of these two kinds of Brahmanical ascetics was the result of interaction between the two cultural regions concerned: Brahmanism in the northwestern parts of the Ganges valley, and the various religious currents aiming at liberation from karmic retribution in its eastern parts.113

Alexander only visited the northwestern parts of the subcontinent, and never reached the Ganges. He visited these northwestern parts at an early date, less than a century and perhaps barely more than fifty years after the death of the Buddha.114 To the best of our knowledge, the spread of Buddhism seriously started under the Mauryas, that is, after Alexander. The same can probably be said about Jainism. It is therefore highly unlikely that there were Buddhists and Jainas in the regions visited by Alexander.115

And yet, Alexander met ascetics, near Taxila.116 The naked sages he met have become a topos in Western classical literature, so much so that it is probably impossible

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113 See Greater Magadha p. 79 ff. (§ IIA); further § II.2.1, below.
114 See now Cousins 2013: 93: "the Buddha's active teaching career must have taken place a century or more before the time of Alexander."
115 See further Appendix X.
116 Herodotus (Histories 3.100), writing c. 430-425 BCE and therefore a hundred years before Alexander, describes an Indian tribe in the following terms: "they will not take life in any form; they sow no seed, and have no houses and live on a vegetable diet" (Karttunen 1997a, citing the translation of A. de Sélinkourt, revised by A. R. Burn). Witzel (2009: 302-303) concludes from this: "[Herodotus'] relatively early date presupposes a lively culture of ascetics, wandering all over northern India, before c. 430 BCE, and this agrees with the early experiences of the Buddha at age 30 (c. 430 BCE), when he joined other Eastern ascetics and with uncertain Jain traditions about Pārśva, the supposed predecessor of Mahāvīra, at c. 750 BCE." Karttunen (1997a: 118) is of an altogether different opinion, considering "any link [of Herodotus' description] with Indian
to derive much detailed historical information about them from this literature.\(^{117}\) However, one thing appears to be beyond reasonable doubt. One of the Indian ascetics, known by the name of Calanus (Kalanos), accompanied Alexander's army back into Persia. Having fallen ill, he then decided to take his own life by voluntarily entering into a fire. This event was witnessed by numerous soldiers from Alexander's army, and recorded by several Alexander historians.

Scholars have puzzled about this voluntary suicide, and have wondered what light it might shed on Calanus's sectarian affiliation. Religious suicide is well known and accepted in Jainism, and there are cases known in Buddhism.\(^{118}\) But, as pointed out above, Buddhism and Jainism do not enter into the picture in the region of Taxila. Some scholars exclude Brahmanism, too, arguing that suicide in fire is not part of Brahmanism. They end up inventing otherwise unknown ascetic groups to explain the riddle.

I think it is worth our while to have a closer look at Brahmanism. After all, Brahmanism was deeply preoccupied with the Vedic sacrificial fire, whose victim was often looked upon as a substitute for the sacrificer. "Le seul sacrifice authentique serait le suicide", Sylvain Lévi observed already in 1898 (p. 133). And Heesterman (1993: 173; with a reference to Heesterman 1987) stated: "self-sacrifice is an all-but-ubiquitous theme in the ritual brāhmaṇa texts, the victim as well as other offerings being regularly equated with the sacrificer".\(^{119}\) Biardeau (Biardeau & Malamoud 1976: 38) adds that "la crémation [of the body of the deceased sacrificer] elle-même est conçue comme un sacrifice où le yajamāṇa est devenu la victime".\(^{120}\) In other words, the sacrificer is or can be the victim in his own sacrifice, with the proviso that most often he is replaced by a substitute; he is in any case himself sacrificed in his fire after his physical death. Clearly there is here, at least in theory, place for sacrificers who decide to forego substitutes or who refuse to wait until they die by natural causes.\(^{121}\) Moreover, Hellenistic and Roman westerners had no difficulty believing that Indians had the custom of incineration themselves. Karttunen (1997: 64-65) draws attention to Zamarus or Zarmanochegas, ascetics, be they Brahmans, Śaivas, or Jainas, ... to be so thin that it hardly deserves serious consideration." Karttunen then continues: "A further ground for the rejection of this claim is that the description closely parallels the Herodotean description of other distant and primitive peoples." Witzel's statement also overlooks the fact that different kinds of ascetics existed, presumably living in different regions of India, who pursued altogether different purposes, so that any generalizing remark about "a lively culture of ascetics" runs the risk of seriously misrepresenting the historical situation; he justifies this by "leav[ing] aside the development of religious thought and philosophy, as such data are treacherous" (p. 303).

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117 See Karttunen 2012. About the late Hellenistic world, Hanegraaff (2012: 14) observes: “there are innumerable references to the ruling idea that the most ancient ‘barbarian’ [this includes Indian] peoples possessed a pure and superior science and wisdom, derived not from reason but from direct mystical access to the divine, and that all the important Greek philosophers up to and including Plato had received their ‘philosophy’ from these sources.” In spite of the difficulties, Beckwith (2015) tries to derive some daring conclusions from the literature; see Appendix X.

118 See most recently Halkias 2015.

119 See also Krick 1977: 93 ff.

120 Further p. 38: "Les funéraires ont donc bien un rapport essentiel à l’activité sacrificielle préalable du mort, en même temps qu’elles en sont le dernier sacrifice, le seul où la victime ne soit plus son substitut."

121 For an analysis of the sacrifice, in which the victim represents (or is) either the sacrificer or his enemy, see Bronkhorst 2012; further 2012a, 2012b, 2013. On suicide in India, see further Thakur 1963.
who was a member of the Indian embassy to Augustus at the end of the first century BCE and committed suicide by fire in Athens, and to the Greek Cynic philosopher Peregrinus who imitated the Indian custom by ascending a pyre at Olympia in 167 CE. Karttunen remains unconvinced, stating (p. 65): "We need not make too much of those authors who claim that this kind of suicide was the rule among Indian philosophers. The case of Calanus soon became famous and was used as a literary topos. This was therefore not necessarily genuine information about an Indian custom, but merely abstracted from the tragic end of Calanus. Megasthenes knew better, though his criticism was probably excessive." However, Megasthenes does not constitute a valid counter-argument, for he lived in and primarily described a part of India that was far from Taxila, where Brahmanism was not the dominant ideology. To know whether self-immolation in fire existed as a recognized option in the area of Taxila, we should not listen to Megasthenes, or to the Buddhist and Jaina scriptures, but to Vedic and para-Vedic literature. And here the following points deserve consideration:

(i) Karttunen himself, following Hillebrandt (1917) and others, draws attention to a passage from the Vasiṣṭha Dharmasūtra (29.4) that states that one reaches the world of Brahma by entering the fire (agnipravesād brahmalokah).

Furthermore,

(ii) Self-immolation in the sacrificial fire may have been part of the early Sattra sacrifice. This is the opinion of Harry Falk (1986: 36 ff.), who adds that this topic was as much as possible avoided, by introducing all manner of substitutes, by those who brought order in the classical sacrifice. The following passage from the Taittiriya Samhitā (7.4.9) illustrates this:

Those who perform a Sattra go to the heavenly world. With the sacrificial gifts they put fire to themselves, with the Upasad ceremonies they bake themselves, with two [days of the Sattra] they cut their hair, with two their skin, with two their blood, with two their flesh, with two their bones, with two the marrow. In the Sattra one is oneself the sacrificial gift. Presenting themselves as sacrificial gift, they go to the heavenly world.

The self-immolation is here described in symbolic terms, but the symbolism may be no more than a thin disguise to cover the fact that real self-immolation sometimes took place, or had taken place.

(iii) An analysis of several Saṃnyāsa-Upaniṣads leads Olivelle (1978: § 12.1) to the conclusion that there existed such a thing as ātura-saṃnyāsa, renunciation for the sick, undertaken by people with the intention of taking their own life, by way of fire or some other means. Olivelle adds that at the time when most of the texts he studies were

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122 Similarly Sedlar 1980: 70: "Modern scholarship tends to agree with Megasthenes that suicide was never a recommended form of death for Brahmins."

123 See Greater Magadha.

124 Heesterman (1993: 176) accepts self-sacrifice in this case, but adds that "self-sacrifice is not the ultimate aim but a last resort".
completed "[s]uicide at the conclusion of the rite of renunciation had become obsolete, a practice referred to in the older texts but no longer in vogue" (p. 223).

(iv) There is, furthermore, a Vedic sacrifice called Śunaskarṇa, in which the sacrificer takes his own life by throwing himself into the fire. This, at any rate, is the opinion of Śābara, the author of the classical commentary (Mīmāṃsābhaṣya) of Mīmāṃsā, the Brahmanical school of thought that remained close to the Vedic scriptures. According to Śābara, the Śunaskarṇa sacrifice is prescribed by the injunction: “Desiring one’s own death one should perform this sacrifice, if he wishes that he should reach the Heavenly Region without any disease” (maraṇakāmo hy etena yajeta, yah kāmayetānāmayaḥ svargam lokam īyām iti). The crucial part of this sacrifice — the self-immolation of the sacrificer — is, again according to Śābara, also prescribed by an injunction: “Then again, there is the text — ‘When the Arbhava has begun, the Sacrificer, having covered the Udumbara post with a borderless piece of cloth, says — O Brāhmaṇas, please complete this sacrifice for me, — and enters the Fire’” (api cedam āmnāyate, ārbhave prastāyamāna audenturūṃ parito ’daśena125 vāsasā pariveṣṭya brāhmaṇāḥ parisamāpayata me yaññam iti sampreyāgāni viśaṭi).126

Śābara lived long after the Vedic period, and perhaps some eight centuries after Alexander's visit to India. What is more, the Vedic and para-Vedic texts that deal with this sacrifice (the Pañcaviṃśa and Jaiminīya Brāhmaṇas, and the Śrautasūtras of Āpastamba, Baudhāyana, Hiranyakesīn, Kātyāyana and Lāṭyāyana; see Appendix II) never state explicitly (as does the text cited by Śābara) that the sacrificer enters the fire. It can yet be argued that Śābara preserves an old tradition. Consider the following.

All these Vedic and para-Vedic texts share the peculiarity that the sacrificer dies during the recitation of a certain Vedic verse. None explains how he dies, and how he manages to die at the right moment. Most of the texts leave us with the impression that the sacrificer's death is not altogether natural, but there is no indication whatsoever how it is brought about.127 One, and only one, text (the Lāṭyāyana Śrautasūtra128) adds that, according to a named authority, the dead body of the sacrificer is subsequently put into the sacrificial fire.

The textual situation is confusing to say the least. One way to make sense of it is that Śābara preserves in explicit terms a tradition that most Vedic and para-Vedic texts avoid being explicit about, perhaps for reasons of changed attitudes with regard to self-immolation. With this possibility in mind, let us return to Calanus.

About the manner of Calanus's death, the Greek sources contain two variants, which Bosworth (1998: 176-177) describes as follows: "In Arrian Calanus reclines on the pyre and remains immobile in the flames. This is part of the material extracted from Nearchus, and no variant is adduced from Arrian's other sources. It is Strabo who comments on the lack of agreement in the matter. He cites one tradition, essentially the same as Arrian's, according to which Calanus lies on a golden couch, covers himself and

125 The edition has sadaśena for parito ’daśena.
126 Śābara, Mīmāṃsābhaṣya ad sūtras 10.2.57 and 58; tr. Ganganatha Jha, p. 1721.
127 See however Heesterman 1987: 94: “the position of the sacrificer lying down on the place of the sacrifice between his fires with his head to the south and completely covered over strongly suggests the cremation ritual, which is, generally speaking, the sacrificer’s last sacrifice”. François Voegeli suggests, in a private communication, that the Śunaskarṇa sacrifice could be meant for a sacrificer who is terminally ill.
128 And of course the parallel Drāhiyāyana Śrautasūtra.
is burned. That is contrasted with another version, presented somewhat elliptically, in which the pyre is built upon ‘a wooden house, filled with leaves’ and Calanus flings himself ... to be consumed like a beam of timber along with the house. There are obscurities in the story, but it seems clear that it portrayed Calanus throwing himself into the flames, not waiting calmly to be consumed." Throwing oneself into the fire is close to Śabara’s entering the fire, closer at any rate than patiently waiting to be burned.

(v) The different sources describing the Śunaskarna sacrifice suggest that Vedic and especially para-Vedic literature may sometimes present us with a bowdlerized version of sacrificial practice. With this in mind, look at Māṇava Śrautasūtra (MSS 8.25), and especially at the following passage: "After having addressed his relatives, he makes the fires rise up in himself. ‘For the fire is a comrade, an observer of joy and pain’, thus it is said. With the verse: ‘This is thy due place of birth, etc.’ he shall set fire to himself in the three sacrificial fires." (sakulyaṁ āmantryātmānaṁ aṅgāṁ samāropayet sakhā hy agnir vai sākṣi sukṛtasya dukṣṛtasyety ayaṁ arthaḥ/ ayaṁ te yonir ṛtvya ity āḥavanīye gārhapatyे daksīṇāgnau cātmānaṁ pratāpayaḥ/ MSS 8.25.6-7). This passage would appear to be about a sacrificer who takes his own life through self-incineration. The only reason to think otherwise is the following context, in which the sacrificer is depicted as still alive. Was this following context added later, in order to modify an earlier prescription of suicide, but without changing the wording?

(vi) Consider next the following passage from the Kathaśruti (p. 31 l. 7 - p. 32 l. 3):\(^{130}\)

Having made the sacrificial priests place all the sacrificial utensils on the limbs of the sacrificer (i.e., of his own), he should place (his five breaths, viz.) prāṇa, apāṇa, vyāṇa, udāna and samāṇa, that are in (the five sacrificial fires, viz.) āhavanīya, gārhapatyā, anvāhāryapacana, sabhya and āvasathya, all [five of them], in all [of the five sacrificial fires].

Once again, the only reason for believing that this passage does not describe a real sacrifice — the self-immolation of the sacrificer — is the following context, in which, here too, the sacrificer is depicted as being still alive. Did it originally describe a real sacrifice?

Finally a word about the nakedness of Calanus and his fellow-ascetics. Bosworth (1998: 188 n. 70) makes the following observation: "Neither Calanus nor Dandamis can have been enjoining complete nakedness, for even the ascetics themselves retained a loin-cloth to preserve their modesty (cf. Chakraborti [1973] 113-15, 121-2)." The reference to Chakraborti’s Asceticism in Ancient India is misleading, for this book points out that Brahmanical ascetics could be completely naked, as is clear from the following passage (p. 113-114):

\(^{129}\) This passage has been studied by J. F. Sprockhoff (1987); see further Bronkhorst 1998: 23-24.

[Āpastamba Dharmasūtra] (II.9.21.11-12) ordains that the ascetic "shall wear clothes thrown away by others as useless". He says again that "some declare that he shall go naked". Bodhāyana [Dharmasūtra] (II.6.11.19 & 21) says that the ascetic "shall wear a cloth to cover his nakedness"... Vasiṣṭha [Dharmasūtra X.9-11] says that the ascetic should cover his body with one piece of cloth or deer-skin or grass cut by cows. ... It is interesting to note that Āpastamba’s hint at nudity of ascetics indicates the possibility of its practice in some circle in his period even in the Brahmanical fold. (emphasis added)

The Museo Nazionale d’Arte Orientale in Rome contains a relief (inv no. 427) that depicts Brahmans that are almost completely naked. Phyllis Granoff (2014), whose article has a photo of this relief, comments (p. 121): “The near nakedness of the Brahmans on the relief in the Museo Nazionale is entirely consistent with the way in which they are depicted at Dun Huang.”

I do not know whether we can be sure that the sages met by Alexander were completely naked, but even if they were, this cannot be used as an argument against their Brahmanical status.

Returning now to the self-incineration of Calanus, it seems safe to conclude that the classical sacrifice as we find it described in various Vedic and para-Vedic texts may be, to at least some extent, a ‘cover-up’ of sacrificial practices that occurred or had occurred. Indeed, it makes sense that the para-Vedic literature on sacrifice, like the literature on Dharma that arose along with it and continued until long after, was primarily a scholastic enterprise. There is no reason to exaggerate this observation, but it does seem to apply to sacrificial self-immolation in fire. This appears to have been a more or less widespread, or at any rate tolerated, practice during some period of Vedic religion. The history of Alexander provides us with a very precise date, 325 BCE, at which it was in vogue. The examples collected by Hillebrandt and others, and the testimony of Šabara, suggest that the practice continued well into the classical period.

I.2. New departures

After all the difficulties described above, the present chapter is meant to show that Brahmanical experience in the Northwest during the centuries preceding the Common

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131 Olivelle 2000: 104: tasya muktam ācchādanam vihitam/ sarvataḥ parimokṣam eke/.
133 Olivelle 2000: 386: ekaśāṭi-pariḥitaḥ/ ajanena vā/ gopralūnais tṛṇair avasṭṛtaśarīrāḥ .../ Olivelle translates the last part "cut for the cows".
134 Interestingly, suicide is not altogether rejected in classical Brahmanical literature, but fire is almost completely absent from the methods proposed; see Olivelle 1978.
135 This is Rocher’s central insight, emphasized in Davis 2012: 18-19; see also Davis 2010: 20 and Lubin forthcoming.
136 Interestingly, Onesicritus as cited by Strabo associates widow-burning with the Kathaioi, i.e., the Brahmanical Kathas; see Garzilli 1997: 218 f.
137 I learn from the doctoral dissertation (in preparation; University of Lausanne) of Marc Tiefenauer that according to the Brahma Purāṇa (214.118) those who have perished in fire (agnau vipānāḥḥ[ḥ]) receive favorable treatment after death.
Era was not only negative. Life under the Śuṅga ruler Puṣyamitra, for example, was not bad for Brahmīns, and he may not have been the only ruler of that kind. There are reasons to think that the centuries following the collapse of the Maurya Empire, in spite of the sufferings they brought to certain Brahmīns, allowed others to work on a corpus of texts that was to be the basis for subsequent developments.

I.2.1. Patañjali and Kātyāyana

The central figure in this section will be the grammarian Patañjali, and to a lesser extent his predecessor Kātyāyana. Patañjali gets this attention for essentially two reasons. The first one is that we know more about his date and region than about any other authors of the period. And the second is that through his work we can draw conclusions about other works in the Sanskrit tradition. As a matter of fact, Patrick Olivelle (2012) has recently argued that most of the extant Dharmasūtras must belong to a period after Patañjali. We will return to this below.

Patañjali is the author of the *Great Grammatical Commentary* (*Vyākaraṇa-Mahābhāṣya*), which comments on Pāṇini’s *Aṣṭādhyāyī*. The influence of his work on subsequent thinkers of all sorts — grammatical, philosophical, astronomical, etc. — can hardly be overestimated, and we will repeatedly have occasion to return to it later on in this book. The present section will concentrate on his date and region.

Patañjali worked after the collapse of the Maurya Empire, and was aware of the political history of his time. He has information about the Mauryas: he mentions them in a passage in which he provides information about some of their activities.138 Patañjali was alive when the Greeks made their inroads into the subcontinent, which was around the middle of the second century BCE.139 He mentions the Śuṅga ruler Puṣyamitra, in whose sacrificial activities he was involved.140 If it is true that he lived in Kashmir while composing his *Mahābhāṣya*, as will be argued below, we may then believe that Puṣyamitra, who conquered Kashmir, brought him there. Puṣyamitra may have died around the time of the Greek deep inroads into the subcontinent.

All this shows that Patañjali was alive around the middle of the second century BCE. It does not show that he finished the *Mahābhāṣya* at that time. If he was a young man then, and completed the *Mahābhāṣya* at a mature age, the completion of this work may have to be dated much later, at a date closer to 100 than to 150 BCE. There is some evidence to support this.

Patañjali mentions the Śakas. This confused both Louis de La Vallée-Poussin and Erich Frauwallner. La Vallée-Poussin (1930: 202) “voit mal que les Śakas, en 170 ou en 150 avant notre ère, aient pris une importance assez grande pour que cet exemple soit possible, pour qu’ils soient dès lors intimentement associés, dans l’estime des brāhmanes, aux Yavanas”. Frauwallner (1960: 108-111 [300-303]) borrowed La Vallée-Poussin’s argument, adding that Patañjali had no reason to mention, beside remote but Indian

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139 See, e.g., Narain 1957: 83.
populations, also a non-Indian population, the Śakas. However, as we have seen, the fact that Patañjali was alive in the middle of the second century BCE, does not need to imply that he completed his Mahābhāṣya at that time. And the Śakas may have made their first appearance in India earlier than La Vallée-Poussin and Frauwallner thought. A Śaka invasion into the south of Afghanistan appears to have taken place in or around 140 BCE (Witzel 2003: 95). Moreover, Taishan Yu (1998: 2; see further pp. 147-166) argues that "some of the Śakas who lived in the Pamir Region ... invaded Gandhāra and Taxila, driving away the Greek rulers and founding the state of Jibin ... as recorded in Hanshu, ch. 96. The date was not earlier than 129 B.C." Presumably it was not much later than 129 BCE either. Patañjali's enigmatic mention of the Śakas is solved if we accept that the Mahābhāṣya was completed after that date.

Some of the reasons for thinking that Patañjali lived in Kashmir when he composed the Mahābhāṣya are as follows. Somewhere in this text, while discussing a grammatical rule, Patañjali gives the following examples: “the part of this road traveled to Pāṭaliputra that is this side of Sāketa”, “the part of the road to Pāṭaliputra to be traveled that is beyond Sāketa” and “the part of the measureless road to be traveled this side of Sāketa”. A look at the map shows that the point of departure in these three examples must lie to the northwest of Sāketa, and far from it (‘measureless road’). Based on this, the suggestion has been made that Patañjali may have lived in Mathurā, a big city in northwestern India, but this seems unlikely. Another look at the map shows that it is far from evident that one travels from Mathurā to Pāṭaliputra via Sāketa. Mathurā is on the river Yamunā, Sāketa on the Sarayū. Both rivers join the Gaṅgā, at different points and from different sides. If one were to travel from Mathurā to Sāketa, one would have to cross the Gaṅgā and some smaller rivers. This trouble could be avoided by traveling to Pāṭaliputra, not via Sāketa, but via Kauśāmbī, simply following the Yamunā and subsequently the Gaṅgā. Indeed, the ancient road from Mathurā to Pāṭaliputra passed through Kauśāmbī. And the road that leads to Pāṭaliputra via Sāketa is the road that ultimately comes from Gandhāra.

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141 Similarly Tarn (1951: 146). Frauwallner’s point about the opposition between Indian and non-Indian populations seems to make little sense if one considers it from the point of view of an inhabitant of the ‘land of the Āryas’.

142 Mahā-bhāṣya II p. 162 I. 7-12 (on P. 3.3.136 vt. 3): yo ’yam adhēvas gata a pāṭalipuratā tasya yad avaram sāketaḥ iti ... yo ’yam adhēvas parīmāṇo gantavyas tasya yad avaram sāketaḥ iti ... yo ’yam adhēvas pāṭalipuratād gantavyas tasya yat param sāketaḥ iti. On roads passing through Sāketa, see Chandra 1977: esp. pp. 17-18.

143 In Schwartzberg 1978, for example.

144 On crossing rivers in ancient India, see Deloche 1980: 124 ff. (“La traversée des rivières”).


146 Pliny the Elder mentions a number of stations on the main artery from Puṣkālāvatī (in Gandhāra) to Pāṭaliputra, among them (in this order) the rivers Yamuna and Ganges, the city of Kāṇyakūṭa (?), the confluence of Ganges and Yamuna, and Pāṭaliputra (Neelis 2011: 189-190). This suggests a route passing north of Mathurā and south of Sāketa, and confirms our impression that no one would travel from Mathurā to Pāṭaliputra through Sāketa.

147 It corresponds more or less to what Neelis (2011: 197) calls the northermost route of the Uttarāpataha: it "followed the foothills of the Himalayas through ancient Hastināpura,
A second reason is also based on an example. Patañjali states:  

"The six muhūrtas are not fixed." These [muhūrtas] sometimes belong to day-time, [and] sometimes to night-time. This is expressed [in the words] ahargatāh ‘belonging to day-time’, rātrigatāh ‘belonging to night-time’.

A muhūrta is a period of 48 minutes. This passage states that the same six muhūrtas that can be part of the day, presumably during the longest day of the year, can also be part of the night, no doubt during the shortest day of the year. There are not many places in India where the difference between the longest and the shortest day is as much as six muhūrtas, i.e. 6 x 48 = 288 minutes, or 4.8 hours. K. V. Abhyankar — in the Select Critical Notes that he added to the 3rd edition of Kielhorn’s edition of the Mahābhāṣya, vol. 1 p. 571-572 — argued: “Such a phenomenon occurs in the districts situated at a latitude of 34° north i.e., as far as India is concerned, in a district, situated to the west of Śrīnagar and to the north of Takṣaśilā which appears to be the place of residence of the author of the Mahābhāṣya.” Abhyankar does not explain how he arrives at this latitude of 34° north, but this result is basically correct.  

It seems yet unlikely that Patañjali’s statement allows of so precise a localization as Abhyankar provides. However, it does suggest a place in the North.

Patañjali may have been the first to claim that the longest day has six muhūrtas more than the shortest one (18 muhūrtas against 12 muhūrtas), he was not the last. Both the Viṣṇu Purāṇa (2.8.33-36 [= 34-38 in Kīrzel 1954: 59-60]) and the Arthaśāstra (2.20.37) make the same claim. The same is true of Sphujidhvaja’s Yavanajātaka (79.31) and the Vedāṅga-jyotisa (Rgjyotisa verse 7; Yajurjyotisa verse 8), and of the Jaina canonical Śūrapaññatī (Skt. Śuryaprājñapti 1.13-14; p. 596-598). None of these texts specify for which part of India this is supposed to be true. The Viṣṇu Purāṇa suggests that it is true for India as a whole. The Arthaśāstra, just a few lines after this claim (2.20.41), “records that the gnomon of a sundial casts no shadow during the lunar month of Āṣāḍha, which falls during the summer solstice”, thus confusing the picture. McClish & Olivelle (2012: xix; see further Olivelle 2013: 37-38) rightly observe that “[i]t is only along the Tropic of Cancer that the sun is directly overhead at this time. If Kauṭilya’s information was based on local conditions (which is not necessarily the case), this would place him somewhere in north-central India.” These contradictory statements in one single passage suggest that the Arthaśāstra took the notion of a longest day of 18 and a shortest day of 12 muhūrtas from another source without fully understanding its implications; the same might then be true of the Viṣṇu Purāṇa and of the other texts mentioned. As a result, we

Ahicchatra, Śrāvastī, and Vaiśāli to the ancient capital of Magadha at Rājagṛha”. See also Dar 2007: 35 and 37: “From Mathurā … [t]he main road … continued eastward with a course that was parallel to the alignment of the Gaṅga and Jamuna rivers. After stopping over Kāśī, Vārānasi, and Śrāvasti, it used to reach Pātaliputra …”


149 This can be verified with the help of the following site: http://culturesciencesphysique.ens-lyon.fr/XML/db/cophysique/metadata/LOM_CSP_QS_heure_coucher_soleil_Sol.xm.


151 See also Thibaut 1899: 22.
cannot be hundred percent sure that Patañjali’s statement proves that the \textit{Mahābhāṣya} was composed in Kashmir, but it is certainly in conformity with this presumed fact.

Aklujkar (2008) adds a number of further reasons, of varying strength, supporting Patañjali’s connection with Kashmir. Among these, we may notice Patañjali’s “greater familiarity with the geographical details of the Indian northwest, particularly with the geographical details of the relatively eastern regions of that northwest (namely, Madra, Vāhika) down to the level of villages” (p. 178-179), and “the fact that, apart from the ruler of Magadha …, the only other rulers mentioned by [Patañjali] are those of Madra and Kaśmīra” (p. 193). However, the perhaps strongest ground for accepting such a connection is the influence on Patañjali from Buddhism in general, and from the new scholastic developments in northwestern India in particular. We will discuss these in a later chapter (§ III.3).

We cannot leave Patañjali without looking at Kātyāyana, considered the author of the \textit{vārttikas} (short nominal sentences) included in the \textit{Mahābhāṣya}. Scholars nowadays agree that the \textit{vārttikas}, though included in the \textit{Mahābhāṣya}, were not composed by Patañjali. The most widely held view is that they, or most of them, have a single author named Kātyāyana.\footnote{An exception is made for the so-called \textit{ślokavārttikas}; this issue will not be considered here.} However, grammarians have not always thought so. Bhartṛhari and his contemporaries divided the \textit{Mahābhāṣya} into portions of separate authorship quite different from those that have become customary.\footnote{Interestingly, a passage that occurs in some Upaniṣads appears to express awareness of the real nature of the \textit{vārttikas}; the fact that it seems to have reached us in a corrupted form may be due to the subsequent misunderstanding. See § I.2.4, below, for details.} Where we see in the short sentences that are commented upon in the \textit{Mahābhāṣya} (the ‘\textit{vārttikas}’) the work of one author (or perhaps several of them) and in the Bhāṣya the work of another, Bhartṛhari’s idea on this matter was different. He too distinguished between at least two authors, but he drew the boundaries differently. We may not be able to say regarding each portion of the \textit{Mahābhāṣya} to which author Bhartṛhari ascribed it. It seems however clear that in his opinion many Bhāṣya portions and many, or most, \textit{vārttikas} belonged together and had one single author. These parts of the \textit{Mahābhāṣya} he called \textit{vārttika}.\footnote{Kielhorn 1876: 53 n. *}, referring to Kaiyata on P. 1.1.29 (I p. 293). ***Added in proofs: A remark in Jayanta Bhaṭṭa’s \textit{Nyāyamaṭṭha} (ed. Gaurinath Saṭrī, Part Two, Varanasi 1983, p. 134 l. 10-11) suggests that Kaiyata had predecessors in the belief that “the later the Muni, the greater his authority”. The passage reads: \textit{āptatarotpānām prāmāṇyāt trimunivyākaranam iti pānimatur eva hi prakṛtiprayaṇayavibhāgam … pratyāsām}. This might be translated: “We follow the division into stems and suffixes accepted by Pāṇini, in accordance with the grammar of the three Munis on the authority of the statements of the [sequentially] more reliable sages.”}

Subsequent authors in the grammatical tradition came to attribute most of the \textit{vārttikas} (i.e., the short nominal phrases) to Kātyāyana. This attribution is clearly in place in Kaiyata's commentary on the \textit{Mahābhāṣya}, which often says in so many words that certain lines from the \textit{Mahābhāṣya} are \textit{vārttikas}. Kaiyata also distinguishes between the three munis of Sanskrit grammar, and lays down the henceforth well-known maxim\footnote{Kielhorn 1876: 53 n. *}, \textit{yathottaram munitrayasya prāmāṇyam “the later the Muni, the greater his authority”}.\footnote{Kronkhorst 1990: 139.}
criterion for identifying vārtikas in Patañjali’s text, and who applied this criterion systematically in his edition of the Mahābhāṣya. Kielhorn argued for the single authorship, by Kātyāyana, of most of the vārtikas. This position has been strengthened in subsequent years. Indeed, there are reasons to think that the vārtikas together constitute a single work that has been preserved in its entirety inside the Mahābhāṣya.\textsuperscript{156} Scharfe (1977: 135) presents the following arguments:

We have reason to believe that no vārtika has been left out: in the sometimes lengthy discussions ... we see a logical development of the argument. When Kātyāyana refers about a hundred times to another vārtika with uktam “It has been said” this reference can be found ...; all eight adhyāya-s conclude with the auspicious word siddham “it is correct”.

Granting, then, that the vārtikas owe their collective existence to someone called Kātyāyana, what can we say about the date and region of this person? About his date, Scharfe (1977: 138) states the following:

To determine when ... Kātyāyana lived we depend on incidental references. On Pāṇini VI 3 21 ṛṣṭhyā ākroṣe “[Before the second word of a compound there is non-disappearance of] the genitive ending if [the compound] expresses an insult” Kātyāyana’s vārtika 3 demands an exception — devānāmpriya, the title of the Maurya kings. The elliptical expression śāka-pārthiva ‘vegetable [eating] king,’ i.e. ‘vegetarian king’ in vārtika 8 on Pāṇini II 1 69, can hardly refer to anybody but Priyadarśin Aśoka and suggests thus a date after 250 B.C. On the other hand, Kātyāyana cannot have lived much later than that because of the large derived literature (variant readings of the vārtika-s, polemics against them, etc.) quoted by Patañjali (c. 150 B.C.)\textsuperscript{157} in his Mahābhāṣya.

It will be clear that these arguments primarily provide a date post quem for Kātyāyana. While there can be no doubt that he must have composed his vārtikas before Patañjali, the distance in time that separates him from the latter can hardly be specified on the basis of the fact that variant readings of vārtikas and polemics against them were known to Patañjali. If we imagine that Patañjali lived in an intellectually active age (after all, Brahmanism may have been awakening from a long slumber), many opinions may have been expressed within a short or even very short span of time. It is moreover open to question whether and to what extent Patañjali drew upon a ‘derived literature’ (whether oral or written); opinions may have been known to him that had not crystallised into texts. The fact that Kātyāyana knows something about the Maurya emperor Aśoka cannot be taken as proof that he lived under the Mauryas, for also Patañjali, as we have seen, preserves memories of that dynasty. It seems a priori likely that Kātyāyana, like Patañjali, lived under a ruler who was sympathetic toward Brahmanism. This may

\textsuperscript{156} There is occasional disagreement whether a line has to be considered a vārtika or not; see, e.g., Bronkhorst 1987e.

\textsuperscript{157} Let us not forget that we only know that Patañjali was alive during the events that took place around 150 BCE (when Indo-Greeks invaded the Indian mainland), not that he composed his Mahābhāṣya at that time. If Patañjali was young in 150 BCE, and old when who composed the Mahābhāṣya, the date of composition could be c. 110 or even c. 100 BCE.
exclude the Mauryas, and would take us, as in the case of Patañjali, to a pro-Brahmanical successor kingdom, presumably that of the Śuṅgas. If we date Patañjali’s Mahābhāṣya in the last quarter of the second century BCE, as proposed above, this leaves plenty of time (from 185 to, say, 125 BCE) to accommodate Kātyāyana.

What we learn about Kātyāyana's region fits in with our guess that he was a subject of the Śuṅga rulers, or at the very least it does not contradict it. Scharfe observes (p. 139):

Scholars have long assumed that Kātyāyana lived in the South, i.e. the Dekkhan, because of a statement of Patañjali. At the end of his very first vārttikā Kātyāyana offers a parallel: yathā laukika-kātyāyana... as in secular and Vedic [affairs].” On the question why Kātyāyana did not simply say: yathā loka vede ca “... as in the world[ly life] and in the Veda,” Patañjali suggests a) that Southerners are overly fond of secondary suffixes or b) that perhaps there is a special meaning to the longer formulation. Patañjali's suggestion has been taken by modern scholars as a statement that Kātyāyana was a Southerner but no such statement is implied; all we may conclude is that Patañjali thought it possible that Kātyāyana was a Southerner and that this may explain the unusual formulation.

Scharfe does not deny that Kātyāyana may have been a southerner — indeed, he provides some arguments that may support this idea — he merely states that Patañjali appears to have thought so. This perhaps excessive skepticism is explained by Scharfe's wish to bring in other arguments; we will consider them below.

What did Patañjali mean by the expression ‘southerner’ (dāksinātya)? The word dāksinātya — which, if Vishva Bandhu's Vedic Word Concdance (VWC) is to be believed, is unknown to Vedic literature — is derived from the indeclinable daksinā by P. 4.2.98 daksināpasācātpurasas tyāk. The indeclinable daksinā is formed by P. 5.3.36 daksinād āc, in the interpretation of which the word adūre from the preceding rule 35 (which will be cancelled by dūre in rule 37) has to be taken into consideration. Dakṣinā therefore means ‘nearby towards the south’, and daksinātya ‘someone who lives nearby towards the south’. It is hard to believe that Patañjali, whose acquaintance with Pāṇini’s grammar is beyond suspicion, used the word in any other meaning than this. We must conclude that it is difficult to accept that Kātyāyana lived in the Dekkhan. If we accept that Patañjali lived in Kashmir, as I argued above, the term daksinātya indicates that he lived not far from there toward the south, conceivably in a part of the Ganges plane that was ruled by the Śuṅgas. Unlike Scharfe, I like to think that if Patañjali thought it likely that Kātyāyana was from the near south, we have good reasons to accept that he was indeed from the near south.

None of the other potential indicators of Kātyāyana's region are as important as the one just discussed (around daksinātya). Scharfe draws attention to the fact that Kātyāyana allows negated verb forms in Sanskrit (such as apacasi, akaroṣi) and points out that such forms are strange to Sanskrit and the Indo-European languages in general, but are a common feature of the Dravidian languages. This makes it likely, he thinks, that Kātyāyana did indeed live in the South. However, taken by itself this feature has little probative force. I therefore now turn to Scharfe's most definite statement:

One thing is certain: Kātyāyana neither belongs to the West nor to the North of India because of his links with the White Yajurveda which was not represented in
these areas; nor was he an Easterner because in his vārtika 8 on Pāṇini VII 3 45, he postulates the bird name vartaka ‘quail’ for the ‘eastern’ dialect while he apparently used vartika — as does the Vājasaneyi Samhitā XXIV 30.

If Kātyāyana did neither belong to the West nor to the North or the East of India, one may be tempted to conclude that he belonged to the South. All these exclusions are based on one single argument: Kātyāyana's presumed links with the White Yajurveda. In support of this Scharfe refers to a short article by B. A. van Nooten called “The grammarian Kātyāyana and the White Yajurveda school” (1968). Van Nooten cites with approval Thieme's observation to the extent that the Vājasaneyi Samhitā, i.e. the Samhitā of the White Yajurveda, belongs to an eastern part of India.

A closer inspection of the evidence does not confirm Scharfe's conclusions. Van Nooten's evidence for a link between Kātyāyana and the White Yajurveda is far from compelling. It is based on a Vedic quotation in the Mahābhāṣya that van Nooten assumes could have originated with Kātyāyana. The link with Kātyāyana is no more than hypothetical. But the link with the White Yajurveda is no less hypothetical. The Vedic quotation concerned cannot be found in Vedic literature, and the resemblance with passages in the Satapatha Brāhmaṇa postulated by van Nooten is not close. The closest resemblance is with a line in the Kātyāyana Śrautasūtra, but even here there are important differences. As a whole, the White Yajurveda receives little attention in the Mahābhāṣya (which includes, as we know, Kātyāyana's vārtikas); this is Wilhelm's conclusion at the end of an exhaustive study and identification of all Vedic quotations in that text.¹⁵⁸

There is however another factor that might be considered to plead in favour of a link between Kātyāyana and the White Yajurveda.¹⁵⁹ A vārtika on P. 4.3.105 purāṇaproteṣu brāhmaṇakalpeṣu shows that Kātyāyana was acquainted with what Patañjali calls yājñavalkāni brāhmaṇāni; it also appears that he considered these statements as having been uttered more or less at the same time as Pāṇini's Aṣṭādhyāyī. These yājñavalkāni brāhmaṇāni will probably have to be identified with statements (called brāhmaṇas in the text) attributed to Yājñavalkya that have been preserved in Brhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad 3–4, and therefore in a part of the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa, the Brāhmaṇa of the White Yajurveda. This part of the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa is associated with the more eastern region of northern India: The court of King Janaka, closely linked to the Upaniṣadic Yājñavalkya, was situated in Videha. Kātyāyana's acquaintance with these relatively new texts supports the idea that he may have had special links with the White Yajurveda, or with that region of the subcontinent.¹⁶⁰

Scharfe accepts the position — first formulated by Max Müller (1860: 138) and Theodor Goldstücker (1861/1965: 204 ff.), and subsequently defended by Paul Thieme (1935: 96 ff.; 1937; 1958: 41 [749] ff.) and taken over by Louis Renou (1938: 173 ff.) — according to which Kātyāyana the grammarian, author of the vārtikas, and Kātyāyana the author of the Vājasaneyi Prātiṣākhya of the White Yajurveda are one and the same person. This, if true, might confirm the former's links with the White Yajurveda. I am not sure whether and to what extent we can derive certain knowledge about Kātyāyana's whereabouts from this fact, if it is one.

¹⁶⁰ See Greater Magadha p. 219–240.
We know more nowadays about the regional links of the White Yajurveda than at the time Scharfe wrote the above passage. Since the Vājasaneyi Samhitā may have been extracted from the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa, we can concentrate on the latter. While books 1-5 of the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa (Mādhyandina) are acquainted with more eastern regions, books 6-10 have their origin in a northwestern location. Books 11-14 frequently mention not only eastern areas (Kosala, Videha) but also more western ones; the final collection and edition of this text portion was made in the east.161 Subsequently the Mādhyandina school may have moved from the Prayāga-Kāśi area towards the west, and have reached Gujarat at some point of time, in any case before 650 CE. Since the middle ages the Vājasaneyins have occupied all of northern India.162

Taking into consideration all these points, we must conclude that the surest evidence regarding Kātyāyana's region remains Patañjali's remark that he was a southerner. It is hard if not impossible to derive precise information from his special links with the White Yajurveda (if he had any).

To sum up. We must remember that Brahmin-friendly rule was re-established in parts of northern India after the collapse of the Maurya Empire.163 Patañjali profited from the rule of Puṣyamitra and succeeding Śuṅgas, and it is tempting to believe that Kātyāyana, too, had political support. This, if true, makes it unlikely that he worked under the Mauryas, who did not have much sympathy for Brahmanism. Since we cannot place Kātyāyana in a time preceding the Maurya Empire (this would bring him too close to Pāṇini, who worked just before, during, or even after Alexander's invasion), it is most probable that Kātyāyana, too, lived and worked under a successor kingdom of the Mauryas, perhaps Puṣyamitra. The latter's rule was not confined to Kashmir, so that Kātyāyana could in that case have worked south of, but not far from, Kashmir, in agreement with Patañjali's remarks. Kātyāyana's date would then have to be later than 185 BCE, the year of the collapse of the Maurya Empire. Since Patañjali may have composed his Mahābhāṣya as late as the last quarter of the second century BCE, this would leave plenty of time.

I.2.2. Manu and his predecessors

Attention was drawn above to Olivelle's (2012) claim that most if not all of the extant Dharmasūtras were composed after the time of Patañjali. Olivelle's main arguments are (p. 118-119):

1) “Patañjali, and possibly even Kātyāyana if we are to trust the interpretation of Patañjali, considered dharma and dharmaśāstra as falling within the category of laukika, worldly, as opposed to the vaidika, the sphere of Vedic discourse. This is in total contradiction to the theology and epistemology of dharma articulated in the Dharmasūtras.”164

163 Deshpande’s (2006: 217) question “Kātyāyana: responding to the heterodoxy of the Mauryas?” is not necessarily in conflict with this. Olivelle (2010: 38) draws a different conclusion: “the first half of the third century [BCE] appears reasonable”.
164 See also Olivelle 2010: 34 ff.
2) "The term and concept dvija, twice-born, is of recent origin. In all likelihood it was a theological innovation created sometime after Patañjali. Yet, in most of the Dharmasūtras, ... with the notable exception of Āpastamba, the twice-born is a central category in their theology and in their articulation of the varṇa ideology." 165

If we conclude from these arguments (and from some others that Olivelle proposes to support his view that these texts are relatively young) that the surviving Dharmasūtras were composed after Patañjali, we should not rush to the conclusion that all these texts were composed under the Śuṅgas. The situation in northern India after the collapse of the Maurya Empire may have been confused, and the importance of Śuṅga rule has sometimes been exaggerated in historical research. Criticizing this tendency, Sudhakar Chattopadhyaya (1958: 22) observed, perhaps rightly, "that there was no empire of the Śuṅgas after the death of Puṣyamitra and it is, therefore, a misnomer to think of a Śuṅga age in ancient Indian history" (quoted in Michon 2007: 175). 166 This does not change the fact that an important body of texts such as the Dharmasūtras could hardly be produced without support. And support for Brahmanism, unlike support for currents such as Buddhism and Jainism, had to come primarily, if not exclusively, from rulers, not, for example, from the merchant class. And yet, there are reasons to think that the production of Dharma literature had begun before Kātyāyana, and therefore presumably before the collapse of the Maurya Empire. In what follows we will consider some of the evidence. 167

Both Kātyāyana and Patañjali refer to dharmasāstra, and Patañjali cites specific rules from Dharma literature, none of them belonging to surviving texts. On one occasion we are in a position to determine with a degree of certainty what text Patañjali was referring to. It turns out that Patañjali knew a text on Dharma that belonged to the Māṇava school of the Yajurveda. We will consider this case in some detail. The first Āhnika of Patañjali’s Vāyākaraṇa-Mahābhāṣya, called Paspaśā, contains the following illustration (1.5.14-16):

\[bhāskyaniyamenābhāskyapraśiṣṭedho gamyate/ pañca pañcanakhā bhakṣyā ity ukte
gamyata etad ato 'naye 'bhāskyā iti/
\]

By restricting things that are to be eaten a prohibition of what is not to be eaten is understood. In the statement 'five five-nailed [animals] are to be eaten', it is understood that [animals] different from these are not to be eaten.

The phrase pañca pañcanakhā bhakṣyā looks like a quotation, and indeed it is found in at least three early works. Rāmāyaṇa 4.17.34 reads:

\[pañca pañcanakhā bhakṣyā brahmakṣatreno rāghava/
śalyakaḥ svāvido godhā śaśaḥ kūrmaś ca pañcamah//\]

165 Note that Nāsik Cave Inscription no. 2 of the Sātavāhanas refers to twice-borns (dīja, Skt. dvija); see Buddhism in the Shadow of Brahmanism p. 65.

166 See also Bhandare 2006 and Malinar 2007: 250 n. 6, which refers to Härtel 1977: 82, inaccessible to me (see however Härtel 1993: 86: "the disintegration of the Śuṅga Kingdom ... began most probably in the last third of the second century BC").

167 Olivelle (2010: 38 f. with note 24) enumerates the authorities that are cited or referred to in the extant Dharmasūtras and concludes: "Clearly we have here a vibrant scholarly debate on a variety of issues, very different from the later tradition which sought to present a singular point of view, eliminating or interpreting away divergent voices."

Mahābhārata 12.139.66 has:

\[
\text{pañca pañcanakhā bhakṣyā brahmakṣatrasya vai viśaḥ/}
\text{yadi śāstraṃ pramāṇaṃ te mābhaksye mānasṛṇaṃ kṛthāḥ/}
\]

Finally, the Buddhist Mahāsutasomajātaka (537) contains the following gāthā (no. 58/425):

\[
\text{pañca pañcanakhā bhakṣkā khattiyena pajānātā/}
\text{abhakṣkāṃ rāja bhakṣkase tasmā adharmikā tuvaṃ/}
\]

None of the surviving Dharmaśtras contains the phrase \textit{pañca pañcanakhā bhakṣyā}, as far as I am aware.\textsuperscript{168} Nevertheless it seems unlikely that Patañjali’s \textit{Mahābhāṣya} quoted this phrase from any of the three sources listed above. One is tempted to suspect that both Patañjali and these other three works drew upon an early work on Dharma which has not survived. This agrees with the fact that all these works unmistakably refer to a known and pre-existing rule rather than prescribing a new one. \textit{Mahābhārata} 12.139.66 goes to the extent of referring to a \textit{śāstra} that is to be taken as authoritative.

This suspicion is strengthened by Bhartrhari’s remarks in his commentary on the \textit{Mahābhāṣya}, edited by the Bhandarkar Oriental Researchs Institute under the name \textit{Mahābhāṣyasāraśīra}. Bhartrhari states (Ms 5d1-2; Sw 19.24; AL 15.19-20; CE I p. 13 l. 18-19):

\[
\text{bhakṣyābhakṣyapra\textit{karaṇa} idam śrīyate pañca pañcanakhā bhakṣyā iti/}
\text{In the section on what should and what should not be eaten it is heard that "five}
\text{five-nailed [animals] are to be eaten."}
\]

So Bhartrhari appears to have known the phrase \textit{pañca pañcanakhā bhakṣyā} as part of a work that contained a section (\textit{pura\textit{karaṇa}}) on what should and what should not be eaten, i.e., presumably a work on Dharma. This work apparently listed the five five-nailed animals concerned, for Bhartrhari refers to them a few lines later as ‘the porcupine etc.’ (śalyakādi; Ms 5d4; Sw 19.28; AL 15.23; CE I p. 13 l. 22). This information is not contained in the \textit{Mahābhāṣya}.

What work could Bhartrhari refer to in this manner? He merely mentions the section (\textit{pura\textit{karaṇa}}) without bothering to name the work itself. In order to answer this question we may first recall that Bhartrhari appears to have been a Maitrāyaṇīya. Rau \textsuperscript{***} (1980)\textsuperscript{169} has shown that most of his Vedic quotations can be traced to the \textit{Maitrāyaṇī Samhita}, Mānava Śrutaśātra and Mānava Gṛhyaśātra. It seems therefore likely that Bhartrhari refers here too to a text belonging to this school.

This impression is strengthened and further specified by the fact that Bhartrhari refers on two other occasions to a ‘section’ (\textit{pura\textit{karaṇa}}) of an unnamed work; both times

\textsuperscript{168} Roodbergen (2008: 255) calls it “the \textit{Mīmāṃsā stock-example for parisam\textit{kaṇḥ}}”, and refers (on p. 266, s.v. \textit{parisam\textit{kaṇḥ}}) to Āpadeva’s \textit{Mīmāṃsāniyāprakāśa} (Edgerton 1929: 245 § 244) and, mistakenly, to Kumārila Bhāṭa’s \textit{Tantravārtti\textit{ka}} 10.7.28; in reality the phrase occurs in Śabara’s \textit{Mīmāṃsābhāṣya} under sutra 10.7.28.

\textsuperscript{169} See also Bronkhorst 1981a; 1987d.
the reference can be traced in the Mānava Śrautasūtra. Both of these references are to ‘the section on modification’ (ūhaprakaraṇa). Once Bhartrhari states (Ms 2d10-11; Sw 8.11-12; AL 7.5-6; CE I p. 6 l. 6-7):

*aṅgasad aghastām aghanann agravhiṣur ākṣann ity ēha-prakarasāntī paṭhaye/

This corresponds to Mānava Śrautasūtra 5.2.9.6:

*haviṣ praiṣe sūktavāke ca adat adatām adan, ghasat ghasatāṁ ghasan, aṅgasat aṅgasat aṅgasān karat karatāṁ karan, aṅgrahāṁ agrahāṁṣtaṁ agrabhīṣṣāṁ ākṣan/

The second time his commentary reads (Ms 3a8-9; Sw 9.3-4; AL 7.20-21; CE I p. 6 l. 21-22):

tatrohaprakaraṇa evaiśāṁ mātā pitā bhratā sanābhisamsargiśabdā ity evamādīny anūhāntī paṭhaye/

This reflects Mānava Śrautasūtra 5.2.9.7:

*mātā pitā bhratā saγarbhaya (’nu) sakāh nābhīrūpam āsamsargi śabdaś caksuh śrōtraṇ vān manus tvān medo havir barhiś śyenaḥ vākṣa ity anūhayaṃ/

It is true that Bhartrhari’s quoted words do not coincide fully with those of the Mānava Śrautasūtra, but then he quotes only the parts that he considered relevant in his discussion. The circumstance that he quoted from memory¹⁷⁰ may be held responsible for certain other deviations. No other Śrautasūtra or similar work comes as close in its wording to Bhartrhari’s above quotations as does the Mānava Śrautasūtra.

The above justifies the probable conclusion that Patañjali cites the words paṅca paṅcanakāḥ bhakṣyāḥ from a text on Dharma belonging to the Mānava school. This at first sight innocent conclusion lands us in the midst of an old scholarly debate. There is a text called Mānava Dharmasāstra, also known by the name Manusmṛti, but this surviving text is more recent than Patañjali. Moreover, the phrase paṅca paṅcanakāḥ bhakṣyāḥ does not occur in it.

Scholars in the nineteenth century wondered whether the present Mānava Dharmasāstra had a predecessor, presumably a Mānava Dharmasūtra. Georg Bühler argued¹⁷¹ (1886: xxi f.; 1882: xviii f.) that such a Mānava Dharmasūtra had actually existed, but is now lost. His strongest argument was based on Vasiṣṭha Dharmasūtra 4.5-8, which reads:¹⁷²

¹⁷⁰ This must account for certain otherwise inexplicable differences between original and quoted versions of the same text. Most notable is Bhartrhari’s description of different names for the same colours in horses and oxen (Ms 1c6-7; Sw 3.14-15; AL 3.7-8; CE I p. 2 l. 26-27):
*aṅgha karkah śona hema ity ucyate gauṣ tu śuklo rakto niṁta iti/

This is a muddled version of Mahā-bh 1.251.5-7 (on P. 1.2.71 vt. 4):
*samāṇe rakte vāra gaur lohita iti bhavaty aṅgha śona iti samāṇe ca kāle vāra gauh kṛṣṇa iti bhavaty aṅgha hema iti samāṇe ca śukle vāre gauh śveta iti bhavaty aṅgha karka iti/

¹⁷¹ For a survey of opinions on this matter before Bühler, see Beaman 1895: 2-4.

¹⁷² These verses will be again discussed below.
pitṛdevatātithipūjāyām apy eva paśuṁ himsyād iti mānavam ///5///
madhuparke ca yañē ca pitṛdaivatakarnaṇī/
atraiva paśuṁ himsyān nānyathēy abraviṇ manuḥ ///6///
nākṛtvā prāṇināṁ hiṃsāṁ māṁsam utpadyate kvacit/
na ca prāṇivadhaḥ svargyas tasmād yāge vadho ‘vadhāḥ ///7///
athāpi brāhmaṇāya vā rājanyāya vābhāgatāya mahokṣānāṁ vā/
mahājām vā paced evam asmā ātithyaṁ kurvantīti ///8///

Bühler (1882: 26-27; with slight variations 1886: xxxi) translates:

5. The Māṇava (Śūtra states), "Only when he worships the manes and the
gods, or honours guests, he may certainly do injury to animals."

6. On offering a Madhuparka (to a guest), at a sacrifice, and at the rites in
honour of the manes, but on these occasions only, may an animal be slain;
that (rule) Manu proclaimed.

7. Meat can never be obtained without injuring living beings, and to injure
living beings does not procure heavenly bliss; therefore the (sages declare)
the slaughter (of beasts) at a sacrifice not to be slaughter (in the ordinary
sense of the word).

8. Now he may also cook a full-grown ox or a full-grown he-goat for a
Brāhmaṇa or Kṣatriya guest; in this manner they offer hospitality to such (a
man).

Bühler was of the opinion (1882: xviii) that “the prose passage from the Māṇava, given
IV,5, furnishes the proof that the author of the Vāsiṣṭha Dharmaśāstra quotes from a
Dharma-śūtra attributed to Manu.” Bühler further argued that the particle iti at the end of
śūtra 8 shows that the quotation from the Māṇava extends up to that point. And indeed,
śūtra 6 is a verse that again occurs in the surviving Manusmṛti 5.41, while the verse that
constitutes śūtra 7 occurs in a modified form at Manusmṛti 5.48.173 This modification was
not without interest for Bühler, because it had been effected “in such a manner that the
permission to slaughter animals at sacrifices has been converted into an absolute
prohibition to take animal life.” Regarding śūtra 8, which is again in prose, Bühler
conjectured that “it is quite possible that, though belonging to the passage from the
Māṇava-śūtra, it contains a Vedic text, taken from some hitherto unknown Brāhmaṇa
which Manu adduced in support of this opinion”. Summing up, Bühler (1882: xix-xx)
 stated:

Śūtra 5 would give the original rule of the author of the Māṇava in an aphoristic
form; Śūtras 6-7 would repeat the same opinion in verse, the latter being probably
Ślokas current among the Brāhmanical community; and Śūtra 8 would give the
Vedic authority for the preceding sentences. This arrangement would be in strict
conformity with the plan usually followed by the authors of Dharma-śūtras. But
whether Śūtra 8 contains a second original aphorism of the Māṇava Dharma-Śūtra
or a Vedic passage, it seems indisputable that the author of the Vāsiṣṭha Dharma-

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173 nākṛtvā prāṇināṁ hiṃsāṁ māṁsam utpadyate kvacit/ na ca prāṇivadhaḥ svargyas tasmān
māṁsam vivarjayet//
sūtra knew a treatise attributed to a teacher called Manu, which, like all other Dharma-sūtras, was partly written in aphoristic prose and partly in verse.

Bühler further maintained (1882: xviii) that “other quotations [from Manu in the Vasiṣṭha Dharmasūtra] show that the Mānava Dharma-sūtra contained, also, verses, some of which, e.g. [Vasiṣṭha Dharmasūtra] XIX,37, were Trishtubhs, and that a large proportion of these verses has been embodied in Bhrigu’s version of the Manusmṛti.”

These arguments were subsequently challenged by P. V. Kane (HistDh I/I p. 101 f., 146 f.), who was followed by Derrett (1973: 31). Kane thought that there “is hardly anything to show that [Vasiṣṭha Dharmasūtra 4.5] is a direct quotation from Manu and not a summary of Manu’s views” (p. 102). Regarding Vasiṣṭha Dharmasūtra 4.8 Kane observed: “There is nothing to show that it is … taken [from the Mānava Dharmasūtra].” Kane further points out that there “are only two places in Vasiṣṭha where the name of Manu occurs for which it is not possible to point out a corresponding verse in the Manusmṛti. They are Vas. 12.16 and 19.37. … Besides these two … there are about forty verses that are common to the Vas. Dh. S. and the Manusmṛti and about a dozen verses which, though not strictly identical, are more or less similar. There are several prose sūtras of Vas. which correspond to the verses of Manu almost word for word.” (p. 102-03). Kane concluded (p. 103): “The hypothesis that commends itself to me is that Vas. contains borrowings from the Manusmṛti or its purer ancient original in verse.” (emphasis added)

It can be seen from the above that not even Kane denied the existence of a predecessor of the Manusmṛti. Indeed, he concluded his exposition of this matter with the words (p. 149): “the theory that the Mānavadharmasūtra once existed and that the extant Manusmṛti is a recast of that sūtra must be held not proved.” His arguments show that in particular the presence of prose sūtras in the predecessor of the Manusmṛti is considered ‘not proved’. What is more, Kane himself (HistDh I/I p. 311) “hazard[s] the conjecture that the author of the Manusmṛti, whoever he might have been, combined in his work the information contained in … two [earlier] works on dharma and arthasastra and supplanted both the earlier works.” And on p. 344 Kane finds reason to think that it “is not unlikely that instead of there being two works there was one comprehensive work embodying rules on dharma as well as on politics [which was] finally recast probably by Bhrigu.”

Whether we were to agree with Bühler in thinking that the predecessor of the Manusmṛti consisted of both prose and verse or with Kane that it contained only

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174 Kane’s idea that only the southern Sūtrakarana of Baudhāyana, Āpastamba and Hiranyakeśin originally felt the need for composing Dharmaśūtras has been disputed by Ram Gopal (1983: 51-52).

175 Towards the end of the surviving portion of the Bhartṛhari’s commentary there is a remark which creates the impression that Bhartṛhari was familiar with a Mānava Dharmasūtra. It reads (Ms 98b2-3; AL 281.13-15; CE VII p. 12 l. 15-16):

iśvaravacanam dṛṣṭam evārtham vadhādām uddīṣyānutiliṣṭhati dharmasūtrakārānām tv aḍṛṇam artham idam bhaksyam idam abhaksyam/ 

However, the fact that the passage of the Bhāṣya commented upon (Mahā-bh I p. 115 l. 1, on P. 1.1.47 vt. 1) contains the word dharmaśūtrakāraḥ prevents us from drawing conclusions from Bhartṛhari’s use of this word rather than dharmaśāstra or the like.
verse, either way there would be reason to assume that the phrase \textit{pa\=\text{n}ca pa\=\text{n}canakah\=\text{h}a bhak\=\text{y}ah} was part of it. This phrase fits well in an \textit{anu\=\text{s}t\=\text{u}b\={h}} metre, as its inclusion in the ślokas of the \textit{Rāmāyaṇa} and \textit{Mahābhārata} (cited above) shows. As a matter of fact it is far from improbable that the verse contained in the \textit{Rāmāyaṇa} remained very close to its original in the Mānava work on Dharma. Bhārtrhari specifies the animals concerned, as we have seen, as ‘the porcupine etc.’ (\textit{s\`alyakādi}), where only the \textit{Rāmāyaṇa} puts the \textit{s\`alyaka} first in its enumeration, unlike the other texts cited in Appendix IV, below. The question to which we have to return below is whether this original Mānava work on Dharma was a predecessor of the surviving \textit{Manusmṛti}. One reason supporting the view that the verse \textit{Rāmāyaṇa} 4.17.34 was almost verbatim taken from a predecessor of the \textit{Manusmṛti} is as follows. The two chapters \textit{Rāmāyaṇa} 4.17-18 belong together and embody an accusation and subsequent defence of Rāma’s killing of the monkey Vālīn, brother of the monkey-king Sugrīva. The defence contains a verse (Rām 4.18.30) that is identical with Manu 8.318, so that the suspicion arises that both these chapters drew upon the teachings of the hypothetical predecessor of the \textit{Manusmṛti}.

The above considerations justify the tentative conclusion that the phrase \textit{pa\=\text{n}ca pa\=\text{n}canakah\=\text{h}a bhak\=\text{y}ah} occurred originally in a work on Dharma belonging to the Mānava, and that this work was still known to Bhārtrhari (5\textsuperscript{th} century A.D.). This Mānava work on Dharma was not necessarily a predecessor of the \textit{Manusmṛti}, a question to which we will return below. Nor does the fact that Bhārtrhari still know this Mānava work on Dharma imply that our \textit{Manusmṛti} did not yet exist at Bhārtrhari’s time. The \textit{Manusmṛti} in its present shape is known to be a work not confined to one Vedic school, which may have made it somewhat suspicious to the true Mānava who preferred to use their old and more sectarian treatise instead. The disappearance of the \textit{Mānava\=v\`acara\=n\`a} may have brought about the loss of this old Mānava text on Dharma. Note in this connection that a number of later authors still quote verses of ‘the old Manu’ (\textit{vy\`ddha

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\textsuperscript{176} If there was more than one predecessor, the one which concerned Dharma is of course only relevant here.

\textsuperscript{177} Jacobi (1893: 128) and Hopkins (1901: 19 fn. 1) considered these chapters a later interpolation. Srinivasan (1984: 1: 129 f.) argues that they are not, but tends to think that Rām 4.17.33-35 (which includes our verse 34) are ‘growth’ (p. 148-49) without giving decisive arguments. Hopkins argued that chapters 17 and 18 were inserted in order to defend the actions of the meanwhile divinized hero, assuming that Rāma was not divine in the original \textit{Rāmāyaṇa}. But Pollock (1984) has now defended the opposite point of view, that Rāma was divine already in the original version of that epic.

\textsuperscript{178} Also with VasDHS 19.45, but this must be later than the Mānava work on Dharma; see above. Note that a number of Mss of the \textit{Rāmāyaṇa} have this verse followed by another one also found in Manu (8.316) and calls these two verses \textit{manunā gītau ślokau}.

\textsuperscript{179} Also Jamison (2000) presents an argument in favour of an early text on Dharma belonging to the Mānava school of the \textit{Mait\`r\`a\=y\`a\=na Samh\`īt\`a}.

\textsuperscript{180} In point of fact, there are a number of disagreements between our \textit{Manusmṛti} and the Mānava \textit{Grhya\=si\=ṭ\`ra}. See Jolly 1879: 81-82; 1885: 36-37; Kane, HistDh I/I p. 310 f.

\textsuperscript{181} Kane (HistDh I/I p. 149) states: ‘Viś\`ar\`ūpa who is generally identified with Sureśvara, the pupil of Śaṅkara, remarks that the Mānava\=caraṇa is not existent (or found). … ‘\textit{na ca mānava\=dica\=ra\=n\`opalabdh\`ir āstī}’ p. 18 of Viś\`ar\`ūpa’s comment on Ācāra section [of the \textit{Yājñ\`avalkya\=smṛti}].’
manu) and ‘the great Manu’ (byhan manu) (Kane, HistDh I/I p. 345, 349), which are not found in our Manusmṛti and which may have belonged to the older Mānava text.\textsuperscript{182}

All questions pertaining to the text of the extant Mānava Dharmasāstra (i.e., Manusmṛti) and its origin have to be confronted with some recent observations made by Patrick Olivelle. He and his wife, Suman Olivelle, have prepared a critical edition and translation of this text (Olivelle 2005), which also contains a long introduction, with various valuable observations on its authorship and historical position.\textsuperscript{183} Olivelle argues, for example, that the Mānava Dharmasāstra has essentially one single author, whom he calls Manu for convenience. The reason for assuming unitary authorship is the structure of the text as a whole, a structure which so far has gone unnoticed. The presence of this structure in the text is convincingly demonstrated.\textsuperscript{184}

Olivelle admits that this single author is not responsible for the whole of the Mānava Dharmasāstra. A number of portions are, as he puts it, the work of redactors. These can be identified by using the overall organizational plan as criterion. Sections that do not fit into this scheme can be recognized as additions inserted between the time of the composition of the text and the earliest manuscripts and other evidence we possess. Olivelle indicates such added passages as ‘Excursus’ in his translation.

Olivelle’s procedure is plausible, and it seems likely that he has identified a number of passages that were indeed not part of the original text composed by ‘Manu’. It is less certain that this procedure is capable of identifying all later additions. Additions that do fit into the overall scheme of the work can evidently not be discovered with the help of a criterion that looks for ill-fitting passages. There is no a priori certainty that redactors should only add ill-fitting passages. On the contrary, one may assume that, given a choice, they would rather add passages that fit in the places assigned to them. This implies that it is possible to follow Olivelle in considering his ‘Excursus’ passages as additions and interpolations, but less easy to conclude from this that what remains, all of it, constitutes the text originally composed by ‘Manu’.\textsuperscript{185}

However this may be, Olivelle adds a number of interesting and valuable reflections on the date and circumstances of the original Mānava Dharmasāstra (i.e., the original text composed by ‘Manu’). Pointing out that Manu, according to at least one tradition, was considered the first king, he states (p. 20; 2004: xxi): “Historically, the rise of the Maurya empire and the overwhelming presence of Aśoka and his imperial reforms must have loomed large. That a treatise on dharma with universal application should be ascribed not just to any king but to the first king, therefore, should come as no surprise.” After considering a number of chronologically relevant factors, Olivelle proposes a lower limit of the 1st century BCE for the text (p. 22). For fixing its upper date, Olivelle starts from the observation that the parallel passages in the Mahābhārata “make a compelling case that the author(s) of the epic knew of and drew upon material from the [Mānava

\textsuperscript{182} Lingat (1967: 108) tends to think that these quotations belong to amplified versions of our Manusmṛti.

\textsuperscript{183} An in many respects similar, but shorter, introduction occurs in Olivelle 2004. Some of the same arguments had already been presented in Olivelle 2003.

\textsuperscript{184} See however Fitzgerald 2014 for some hesitations.

\textsuperscript{185} The question whether the final chapter of the Mānava Dharmasāstra (no. 12) is a later addition is discussed in Appendix III.
The reference in some passages of the *Mānava Dharmaśāstra* to gold coins, combined with the scholarly consensus that the minting of gold currency did not take place until the Kusānas, leads Olivelle to pushing forward the date of his text to the 2nd-3rd centuries CE (p. 24-25).

Olivelle’s proposals create a dilemma, which he does not further discuss. The gold currency suggests a relatively late date for the extant *Mānava Dharmaśāstra*, its relationship to the *Mahābhārata* an earlier one. With regard to the date of the latter, Olivelle (p. 23) cites Hiltebeitel (2001: 18): “I suggest, then, that the Mahābhārata was composed between the mid-second century BCE and the year zero.” If the *Mānava Dharmaśāstra* was composed before the *Mahābhārata*, as Olivelle maintains, and if we accept Hiltebeitel’s view, it cannot be dated to the 2nd-3rd centuries CE, as is suggested by the references to gold coins.

Hiltebeitel’s dating of the *Mahābhārata* is linked to his understanding of this text (i.e., the archetype underlying the Critical Edition) as having been composed (written) by a ‘committee’ or ‘team’, at most through a couple of generations (2001: 20). Given that the Critical Edition establishes a written archetype, he does not think that we need to assume prior written redactions. The established archetype of the *Mahābhārata*, in his opinion, should include most of the passages and features of the established text, and indeed, may have included the epic’s design of eighteen parvans and a hundred ‘little books’ or upaparvans (2001: 24-26).

Hiltebeitel’s understanding of the composition of the *Mahābhārata* is not without appeal, but is not the only possible one. The *Mānava Dharmaśāstra*, as understood by Olivelle, provides us with an alternative model. Here, as we have seen, a single text subsequently suffered additions and insertions which yet found their way into all surviving manuscripts. How could this come about? Olivelle gives the following explanation (2005: 51; cp. 2003: 559-560):

I agree with Lariviere’s (1989: xii) hypothesis that the Dharma śāstras continued to expand with the addition of new materials “until a commentary on the collection was composed. A commentary would have served to fix the text, and the expansion of the text would have been more difficult after that.” Because I consider the [Mānava Dharmaśāstra] to have a single author, I take these emendations as produced by redactors working on the original text. Such activities were made more difficult after the text was ‘fixed’ by early commentators such as Bhāruci and Medhātithi, but they did not cease completely. Changes after that period, however, were limited to the addition of individual verses and minor changes in the wording of verses detectable through ‘lower criticism’.

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186 The introduction to Olivelle 2004, which is more condensed than the introduction to Olivelle 2005, does not discuss the relationship between Mahābhārata and Mānava Dharmaśāstra. Note in this connection that Bühlcr (1886: Ixxx) has “succeeded in identifying upwards of 260 verses or portions of verses, not attributed to Manu, with ślokas of the Manu-smṛti. This number ... corresponds to about one-tenth of the bulk of the latter work ...”
188 Strictly speaking, there is of course no ‘year zero’; Richards 1998: 10.
189 Hiltebeitel himself (2006: 231) “leans toward the epic being likely earlier [than Manu].”
190 For a fuller discussion of this position, see § I.2.5, below.
191 Hiltebeitel (2006: 231), perhaps not surprisingly, is of the opinion that some of Olivelle’s “interpolations” “could be seriously challenged”.

*New B*
The composition of a first commentary is an obvious way in which a text may be fixed in a shape different from its earliest written form. It is not necessarily the only possible one. With regard to the Mahābhārata, another explanation for presumably the same (or a closely similar) phenomenon has been suggested, most notably by James Fitzgerald. Fitzgerald (2002: 89 n. 1) states: “By ‘the epic as we have it’ and ‘text of the Mahābhārata’ I mean the written redaction of a Sanskrit text of the [Mahābhārata] that was composed and promulgated sometime around the time of the Gupta empire. This text was approximately recovered in the unsuccessful effort to arrive at a critical edition.” In other words, not a first commentary, but some initiative (perhaps political) “fixed” the text of the Mahābhārata which has been recovered, with an unknown degree of success, in its Critical Edition. This ‘Gupta version’, to be sure, was not the first written version of the Mahābhārata. About the first written version Fitzgerald has a number of things to say; we will turn to these below.

Olivelle knows this alternative way of understanding the textual history of the Mahābhārata (2005: 24): “Fitzgerald offers a more conservative view, acknowledging several redactions, the last taking place during the Gupta period.” Fitzgerald’s position is more to the liking of Olivelle, for it allows him to maintain his relatively late date for the Māṇava Dharmaśāstra: “If we accept that the [Māṇava Dharmaśāstra] was known to the writers of the Mahābhārata, then, even with a more conservative dating than Hiltebeitel’s, the [Māṇava Dharmaśāstra] must have been in existence by about the 2nd century CE.” This is a great deal closer in time to the date suggested by the references to gold coins.

It is clear that Olivelle implicitly opts for Fitzgerald’s dating of the Mahābhārata.

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192 As justification for a completed text around the time of the Gupta empire, a reference is often made to the characterization of the Mahābhārata as containing 100,000 verses in a copper-plate inscription from 532-533 or 533-534 (so, e.g., Fitzgerald 2006: 259), which corresponds approximately to the text of the Critical Edition. See further below, § I.2.5. It is not usually added that the inscription concerned, having indicated the length of the Mahābhārata, then attributes to it a number of verses that are not found in the Critical Edition (or its notes). See Fleet 1887: 135-139, and below.

193 Cp. Fitzgerald 2001: 69: “The production and promulgation of this text would have required a major effort and significant expense, so we must imagine the support and financial backing of some prince or princes, or direct imperial support. It is conceivable that this postulated second major redaction of a written Sanskrit Mahābhārata was a response to the turmoil, invasions, and foreign imperial control of northwest and north central India in the early centuries of the Christian era.” It is not clear whether this theory of a “major effort and significant expense” lives up to its task, for it sheds no light on the question why the ‘Gupta version’ should have become the archetype of all surviving versions. This fact is due to subsequent events, whose nature remains unknown so far. See further § I.2.5. below.

194 Fitzgerald (2001: 68 n. 16) is aware of the speculative aspect of his reconstruction: “Those who would argue that this Gupta text pointed to by the Pune edition is the only written Sanskrit [Mahābhārata] text for which we have firm evidence would be correct. My argument for a Śunḍa or post-Śunḍa written redaction of the text is based on an interpretive reading of the [Mahābhārata] against the historical record. It is speculative, though it is, at the very least, plausible. My speculative sketch of a history of the written Sanskrit Mahābhārata tradition provides a reasonable way to account for systematic artistic changes that seem apparent to me between the postulated early text of the [Mahābhārata] and the approximately known Gupta text.”

195 Note that the first written version, seen in this way, is not identical with the normative redaction proposed by Bigger (2002).
against Hildebeitel’s, but he does not say so.\textsuperscript{196} In Fitzgerald's opinion, the first major written Sanskrit redaction of the \textit{Mahābhārata} does not cover the whole of the surviving \textit{Mahābhārata}, nor for that matter the whole of the version constituted in its Critical Edition. Indeed, Fitzgerald, as we have seen, is of the opinion that a second redaction took place many centuries later (resulting in the ‘Gupta text’). As a matter of fact, Fitzgerald (2006) dates the first written redaction of the \textit{Mahābhārata} to “sometime between 200 B.C. and 0 A.D.”, but also allows for “its continued growth and development until the written Sanskrit text was more or less fixed sometime shortly before or during the Gupta era”.\textsuperscript{197}

If we now return to the question raised by Olivelle, it will be clear that a statement to the extent that the \textit{Māṇava Dharmaśāstra} was known to the writers of the \textit{Mahābhārata} is in need of specification if it is to make sense. Was this text known to the writers of the ‘main \textit{Mahābhārata}’, i.e., its first written redaction, or rather to those responsible for the ‘Gupta text’, or perhaps to those who, in the intervening period, added material to the text? Judging by his chronological conclusions, Olivelle meant to say that the \textit{Māṇava Dharmaśāstra} was known to those responsible for the Gupta text. However, he does not clearly say so. What he does say rather suggests that he believes that all writers of the \textit{Mahābhārata}, both early and late, knew the \textit{Māṇava Dharmaśāstra}. These are his words (2005: 23):

The relationship between the [\textit{Māṇava Dharmaśāstra}] and the \textit{Mahābhārata} has been a topic of discussion ever since Hopkins’s (1885) study. Hopkins (1885: 268) concluded that the [\textit{Māṇava Dharmaśāstra}] was put together “between the time when the bulk of the epic was composed and its final completion.” Bühler, after a lengthy discussion of the parallel passages in the two works, concluded that the [\textit{Māṇava Dharmaśāstra}] has not drawn on the \textit{Mahābhārata} and that both drew on the same stock of ‘floating proverbial wisdom’. The references and citations collected by Hopkins, I think, make a compelling case that the author(s) of the epic knew of and drew upon material from the [\textit{Māṇava Dharmaśāstra}]. It is more likely, I think, that a narrative epic would draw on expert śāstras for its discussions of legal matters than the other way round.

Unfortunately Olivelle does not discuss in any detail the “references and citations collected by Hopkins”, and indeed, he draws a different conclusion from them than Hopkins himself. Hopkins, as we can learn from the above citation, put the composition (he speaks rather of collation) of the \textit{Māṇava Dharmaśāstra} “between the time when the bulk of the epic was composed and its final completion”. In terms of Fitzgerald’s understanding, this can be interpreted to mean “between the first written version (the ‘main \textit{Mahābhārata}’), and the ‘Gupta version’”. As a matter of fact, Hopkins’s evidence does not make a compelling case that all the authors of the epic knew the \textit{Māṇava Dharmaśāstra}, but can be interpreted to mean that later contributors to the epic knew it. As Hopkins observed (1885: 268): “Not more than half the remarks ascribed to Manu are

\textsuperscript{196} We, too, must accept that the \textit{Mahābhārata} in its Critical Edition contains at least some late passages, in view of the late date of the discussion between King Yudhiṣṭhira and the sage Mārkandeya, discussed above (§ I.1.2).

\textsuperscript{197} Fitzgerald (2014: 491) yet considers a date of the \textit{Māṇava Dharmaśāstra} in the 2nd to 3rd centuries CE "as good as our current knowledge allows".
found in the present Mānava-treatise which the Hindus call the Manu-treatise; but, the
further on we come toward modern times, the more often the quotations from Manu fit to
our present Mānava-text.”

It will be interesting to consider the three passages which do not just mention
Manu, but seem to actually refer to his treatise. One reference to the Śāstra of Manu
occurs in the Anuśāsanaparvan (Mbh 13.47.35: manunābhīhitam śāstraṃ ...); the
following verse “is clearly a paraphrase of Manu IX, 87, and reproduces its second line to
the letter” (Bühler 1886: lxxvi; Mbh 13.47.36cd = Manu 9.87cd). The Anuśāsanaparvan
may be a later accretion to the text of the Mahābhārata.198 The other two passages are of
more interest, because they occur in the Rājadharmaparvan, some of which must have
already been part of the ‘main Mahābhārata’. Indeed, they occur in chapters (adhyāya)
56 and 57 respectively, part of the portion 56-58 which Tokunaga (2005) considers to be
“the original lecture of Rājadharma that Bhīma delivered as śokāpanodana” and as
belonging “to the period earlier than the Manusmṛti” (p. 200). Chapter 56, which is the
very first chapter of the Rājadharmaparvan, contains a reference to two verses sung by
Manu in his Laws (Mbh 12.56.23: manunā ... gītau ślokau ... dharmeṣu sveṣu ...). The
first of these two has a verse corresponding to it in the surviving Mānava Dharmāśṭra
(Mbh 12.56.24 = Manu 9.321), the second does not. There is another reference to two
verses pronounced by Manu in the immediately following adhyāya 57 (Mbh 12.57 43:
prācetasena manunā ślokau cemāv udāḥrtau rājadharmeṣu ... i[au] ... śṛṇu); the two cited
verses in this case (44-45) have no parallel in the Mānava Dharmāśṭra (Bühler 1886: lxxvii). Most of these verses, then, cannot be found in the present text of the Mānava
Dharmāśṭra.199 All in all there remains little reason to think that the ‘main
Mahābhārata’ was acquainted with the Mānava Dharmāśṭra as we know it.

Further caution is called for on account of some passages in the Vasiṣṭha
Dharmāśṭra. According to Olivelle (2005: 22), the Mānava Dharmāśṭra “is clearly
posterior to [...] Vasiṣṭha”. However, the Vasiṣṭha Dharmāśṭra refers to the Mānava
Dharmāśṭra, and cites two identifiable verses from it. The reference occurs VasDhS
4.5, which may be translated: “The treatise of Manu states that an animal may be killed
only on the occasion of paying homage to ancestors, gods, or guests.”200 Immediately
after this remark two ślokas follow (VasDhS 4.6-7) which are almost identical with Manu
5.41 and 5.48. Olivelle (2000: 646) considers the authenticity of these two ślokas
somewhat doubtful,201 but admits that “they are found in all mss., including Ka, Kb, and
Cal. ed., which represent somewhat independent manuscript traditions”.202 At four other
casions the Vasiṣṭha Dharmāśṭra cites a verse it calls a mānava śloka. Twice this cited
śloka is identical, or almost identical, with a verse from the Mānava Dharmāśṭra.
Vasiṣṭha Dharmāśṭra 20.18 announces a mānava śloka, then cites a verse that is almost

198 See § 1.2.5, below.
199 Fitzgerald has argued that adhyāyas 56-60 must be looked upon as an accretion to the original
core of the Rājadharma (this core presumably follows the accretion in the present text).
200 VasDhS 4.5: pīṭredvātātiṣṭhipūjyāyam eva pāśuḥ hiṃṣyād iti mānavaṃ. Olivelle assumes that this
animal may be killed only on the occasion of paying homage to ancestors, gods, or guests.’”
However, the ‘quoted’ passage does not occur in the Mānava Dharmāśṭra.
201 Cp. also the following: “Vasiṣṭha has been less faithfully preserved than the other
Dharmāśṭras, probably because it lacked an early commentary.” (Olivelle 2000: 632)
202 Recall that Bühler (cited above) quoted these same verses as evidence for the existence of an
earlier Mānava Dharmāśṭra.
identical with Manu 11.152. *Vasiṣṭha Dharmasūtra* 3.2 does the same, and then cites Manu 2.168.

Olivelle’s logic would compel him to conclude that the *Vasiṣṭha Dharmasūtra* is posterior rather than anterior to the *Mānava Dharmaśāstra*. He admits to being “inclined to place Vasiṣṭha closer to the beginning of the common era, or even in the first century CE close to the beginning of the Smṛti era. In the later chapters (25.1, 10; 28.10), for example, Vasiṣṭha uses the pronoun ‘I’, a practice unknown to the earlier writers and common in the later Smṛtis, which are presented as the personal teaching of a god or sage. In Vasiṣṭha (16.10, 14) we also encounter for the first time the use of written evidence in judicial proceedings.” We should expect him to date Manu prior to this date. Yet we have seen that he believes Manu to be posterior to the *Vasiṣṭha Dharmasūtra*. 203

Manu 5.41 also occurs in the *Śāṅkhāyana Grhyasūtra* (2.16.1),204 as do close parallels to Manu 3.100 (ŚaGS 2.17.1) and 3.103 (ŚaGS 2.16.3). Must we conclude from this that the *Śāṅkhāyana Grhyasūtra* is posterior to the *Mānava Dharmaśāstra*? Or are these verses later additions to the *Śāṅkhāyana Grhyasūtra*, as Gonda (1977: 607) thought?

The situation is further complicated by other facts. Whatever the precise date of the *Mānava Dharmaśāstra*, we may be sure that it existed in the sixth century CE. Yet there are numerous inscriptions from that and the following centuries that explicitly ascribe a number of verses to a *Mānava Dharma* or *Mānava Dharmaśāstra* that do not occur in it. These are several or all of the following four verses, very frequent in inscriptions:205

\[ \text{uktān ca Mānave dharmaśāstre:} \\
\text{bahubhir vasudhā dattā bahubhiś cānupālītā/} \\
\text{yasya yasya yadā bhūmis tasya tasya taddā phalam//} \\
\text{mā bhuvidesaphalaṁśaṅkā vaḥ paradatteti pārthivāḥ/} \\
\text{svadānāt phalam ānantiyaṁ paradattānupālāne//} \\
\text{svadattāṁ paradattāṁ vā yo hareta vasundharāṁ/} \\
\text{sa viśṭhāyāṁ kṛmir bhūteṣvī pītybhīḥ saha pacyate//} \\
\text{saṣṭiṁ varṣa-sahasrāṇi svarge modati bhūmidah/} \\
\text{ākṣeptā cānumantā ca tāny eva narake vaset//} \]

A South Indian inscription from the eighth century ascribes some of these verses to a ‘Vaisṇava Dharma’.206 Interestingly, several of these verses are in other inscriptions ascribed to the Rṣis,207 to Brahman,208 or to the Mahābhārata, in one inscription from the first half of the sixth century CE even to “the Mahābhārata that consists of a hundred thousand verses” (*Mahābhārata śatasahasryāṁ saṁhitāyāṁ*).209 To top it all, these verses

203 In a more recent publication Olivelle (2010: 40) states: “Vasishtha’s text … has been badly transmitted and appears to have undergone repeated redactions. It is currently the latest of the early dharmasūtras, composed at a time not too distant from Manu.”

204 Manu 5.41: madhuparke ca yajñē ca pitṛdvatakarmanā/ atrāvira pasāvo hīṁsyā nānyatretya abraviṅ manuḥ/. ŚaGS 2.16.1 has same for yajñē.

205 Basak 1940: 129 lines 36-41; Tripathy 1997: 96, 221, 225, 229, 261 and passim.

206 Krishna Sastri 1924: 304.


209 Fleet 1887: 135-139.
are not found in the extant Mahābhārata either.\textsuperscript{210}

What do we conclude from all this? Are the Vasiṣṭha Dharmasūtra and the Śāṅkhāyana Grhyasūtra more recent than the Māṇava Dharmaśāstra? Or do we have to be more circumspect in drawing chronological conclusions from references to Manu or his work that can actually be identified in the surviving Māṇava Dharmaśāstra? We may not be in a position to choose between these two options at the present state of our knowledge. One thing is certain. If it can be maintained that, in spite of the evidence just considered, the Vasiṣṭha Dharmasūtra is older than the Māṇava Dharmaśāstra, the same can then be maintained with regard to at least some of the passages of the Mahābhārata that yet refer to identifiable verses of the Māṇava Dharmaśāstra.

In a more recent publication Olivelle (2007) draws attention to the at times close similarity between the Māṇava Dharmaśāstra and the Gautama Dharmasūtra. The Gautama Dharmaśāstra, unlike the Vasiṣṭha Dharmasūtra, does not by name refer to the Māṇava Dharmaśāstra. Nothing therefore prevents Olivelle from concluding that “the author of Manu used Gautama as one of his primary sources” (p. 681). The borrowing that took place amounts “in several instances to the versification of the sūtras of Gautama” (ibid.). However, Olivelle also argues that “the prose of Gautama is probably dependent on verse originals” (p. 689). The Sūtra style of the Gautama Dharmaśāstra was, according to Olivelle (2007: 689; 2000: 8), due to “the author’s deliberate attempt to produce an ideal sūtra work”. This, if true, leads to the following remarkable situation: an original verse text was, probably in part, made into a Sūtra work (the Gautama Dharmaśāstra), which (or part of which) in its turn became the basis of a verse text (the Māṇava Dharmaśāstra). Continuing this line of speculation, one is free to ask what name the original verse text had: might it have been the original Māṇava text on Dharma? Is it possible that some, or all, of the untraceable verses that are attributed to Manu originally belonged to this verse text that has now disappeared? I am not willing to make any pronouncements on this matter, but the question is worth our attention.\textsuperscript{211}

In an even more recent publication Olivelle (2008: xix f.) believes he has found similarities between the Māṇava Dharmaśāstra and the work of Aśvaghosa. Here too, there is no question of Aśvaghosa referring to the Māṇava Dharmaśāstra. He does refer to Manu in a general way, but we have seen that no conclusions can be drawn from this. Nor can conclusions be drawn from the supposed technical meaning given to the word moksa both by Aśvaghosa and by Manu; Appendix V, below, will show that the Māṇava Dharmaśāstra does not use this word in the technical meaning assigned to it by Olivelle. The one remaining argument is Aśvaghosa’s use of the theology of debt to defend the position that a man should take to asceticism only in old age, also found in the Māṇava Dharmaśāstra. I am not sure, however, whether this single argument can bear the weight of drawing chronological conclusions (Aśvaghosa more recent than Manu), as proposed by Olivelle.

\textsuperscript{210} This last inscription is sometimes invoked by modern scholars to prove that the Mahābhārata had approximately its present size in the first half of the sixth century CE; the unreliability of the ascription of verses to that text in this inscription may conceivably put the information about the epic’s length in doubt as well. Note further that some of these verses are ascribed to a ‘Dharma-śāsana’ in a ninth century inscription of a Buddhist (!) king; Kielhorn 1892; Barnett 1926.

\textsuperscript{211} The question of a Māṇava predecessor of the Māṇava Dharmaśāstra (see above) presents itself here again.
Summing up our reflections so far, it can be said that there is evidence to believe that there once was a Mānava work on Dharma. This work was known to Patañjali, and was therefore composed before him. It was still known to Bhartrhari some 500 or 600 years later. It is much less certain whether this Mānava work on Dharma was a predecessor of the Mānava Dharmaśāstra, also called Manusmrī, which survives until today. We cannot even say with certainty that there was any connection whatsoever between the two works — the original Mānava work on Dharma and the Manusmrī — this in spite of the potentially misleading similarity of names.

The investigation of possible connections also led us to some more or less plausible conclusions regarding the dates of composition of the extant Mānava Dharmaśāstra and the Mahābhārata. The Mānava Dharmaśāstra (i.e. the Manusmrī) may have been composed during the early centuries of the Common Era, and Olivelle’s suggested date (2nd–3rd centuries CE) is conceivable, though not certain.212 Regarding the Mahābhārata, Olivelle’s reflections add, perhaps unintentionally, an argument in support of Fitzgerald’s understanding of the text history of this text. Moreover, they allow us to think of the Mānava Dharmaśāstra as a text whose core (i.e., all but the later additions) was composed at a time when the ‘main Mahābhārata’ existed already, but the archetype underlying its Critical Edition not yet. In a certain way the Mānava Dharmaśāstra is therefore contemporaneous with the Mahābhārata, in the sense specified.

The geographical horizons of the two texts — Mānava Dharmaśāstra and Mahābhārata — appear to support this relationship. With regard to the Mahābhārata, Brockington (1998: 199) points out, “it is very noticeable that the whole of [Central and Eastern India] is seen as menacing and also as peripheral to the real action of the basic epic. By contrast, in some of the expansions to the basic narrative and in the didactic portions, definite efforts are being made to include the whole of India within the ambit of the epic.” The Mānava Dharmaśāstra may situate itself between these two extremes by expanding the definition of Āryāvarta so as to cover the land between the Himalaya and Vindhya ranges and “extending from the eastern to the western sea” (Manu 2.22).

It is also interesting to observe that a portion of the Mahābhārata that must have been part of the ‘main Mahābhārata’ shows a rather superficial acquaintance with the ideologies of Greater Magadha, and criticizes them.214 Later parts of the Mahābhārata incorporated into the ‘Gupta text’, starting with the Mokṣadharmaparvan, have absorbed a substantial part of these ideologies and present them as Brahmanical thought. If, as seems possible, the Mānava Dharmaśāstra must be situated between the ‘main Mahābhārata’ and the ‘Gupta text’, it will be interesting to find out how much understanding of the alternative ideologies it contains. Here it must suffice to note that

212 In a presentation (“Cosmogony in the transition from Epic to Purānic literature”) at the Fifth Dubrovnik International Conference on the Sanskrit Epics and Purāṇas (August 2008), Horst Brinkhaus has argued that the cosmogonic account in Manu 1 (including verses 5-31 which are original according to Olivelle) has borrowed from Harivamsa 1, which is presumably younger than the Mahābhārata. He adds in this way a further difficult piece to an already complicated puzzle.

213 Earlier sources (Baudhāyana, Vasiṣṭha, the grammarian Patañjali) defined Āryāvarta as extending eastward until a mysterious kālakavana, which may have been near Prayāga, at the confluence of the Ganges and the Yamunā; see Olivelle 2000: 10. It is tempting to see Manu’s expanded definition as embodying the new claim that the eastern Ganges valley was Brahmanical territory.

214 See Greater Magadha chapter IIA.2.
the *Mānava Dharmaśāstra* as a whole shows acquaintance with these ideologies, most notably the doctrine of rebirth and karmic retribution.

I.2.3. Literature on statecraft

An important expression of Brahmanical thought is the literature on statecraft. The most important text that has survived is the *Arthaśāstra*, whose author Kauṭilya has at some point in time been identified with Cāṇakya, a minister of Candragupta the creator of the Maurya Empire. Research has shown that the extant text is a composite text that is far younger than that, dating perhaps from the beginning of the Common Era.\(^{215}\) The question to be considered here is whether there were texts on statecraft during the centuries preceding the Common Era, i.e., during or preceding the centuries in which texts such as Patañjali’s *Mahābhāṣya*, the extant Dharmasūtras, and the *Mahābhārata* were composed. It appears that texts on statecraft did indeed exist well before the extant *Arthaśāstra*, and that some of these texts were referred to as Bhāṣyas in subsequent literature. This term does not yet occur in this sense in Vedic literature.

Not all early Bhāṣyas deal with statecraft. The earliest Bhāṣya we can date with any precision is the grammatical *Mahābhāṣya* (“Great Bhāṣya”), composed by Patañjali after the middle of the second century BCE.\(^{216}\) It accompanies the Sūtra of Pāṇini. The *Mahābhāṣya* itself refers to a Bhāṣya on two occasions, both times to another portion of the *Mahābhāṣya* itself.\(^{217}\) Though this does not prove anything, it allows for the possibility that the author of the *Mahābhāṣya* was not acquainted with any other Bhāṣya(s) than his own work.

There is an earlier text that is regularly referred to as Bhāṣya by its commentators: Yāska’s *Nirukta*. The commentator Durga, for example, states right at the beginning that the *Nighantu*, whose words the *Nirukta* explains, is a sūtrasamgraha, and that the *Nirukta* itself is its bhāṣyavistara.\(^{218}\) However, there is no indication whatsoever that the *Nirukta* looked upon itself as a Bhāṣya: it does not use this expression.

The extant *Arthaśāstra* describes itself as a combination of a Sūtra and a Bhāṣya, and refers to earlier Bhāṣyas. It concludes with the following statement:

\[
\text{drṣṭvā vipratipattim bahudhā śāstreṣu bhāṣyakāśrānām/}
\text{svayam eva viṣṇuguptaś cakāra sūtraṃ ca bhāṣyaṃ ca//}
\]

\(^{215}\) First or perhaps second century CE, according to Scharfe (1993: 293), 100 BCE-100 CE according to McClish & Olivelle (2012: xx-xxi). See further Olivelle 2013: 25 ff. Olivelle (2013: 14) also points out that the text may originally have been called *Daṇḍanīti* rather than *Arthaśāstra*.

\(^{216}\) See § I.2.1, above.

\(^{217}\) Both Mahā-bh II p. 145 l. 17-18 (on P. 3.3.19 vt. 1) and Mahā-bh II p. 177 l. 21 (on P. 3.4.67 vt. 1) use the words *ukto bhāvaabheda bhāṣye* in order to refer to Mahā-bh II p. 57 l. 7-8 (on P. 3.1.67, before vt. 1) *asti khal api viṣṇeṇaḥ kṛdabhihitasya bhāvasya tiṇabhihitasya ca*, as pointed out by the editor Kielhorn in a footnote (II p. 177 n. 4).

\(^{218}\) Durga: *Nirukta-vṛtti*, vol. I p. 4 l. 20 & p. 5 l. 15.
Seeing the manifold errors of the writers of commentaries (bhāsyakāra) on scientific treatises, Viṣṇugupta himself composed the Śūtra as well as the Bhāṣya.\footnote{KAŚ p. 283; tr. Kangle. Olivelle (2013: 699) comments: “This verse coming at the very end was probably inserted into the text during the time when the ascription of the text to a definite author was still under review.”}

The conclusion that the Arthasāstra refers to earlier works is confirmed by its initial statement:

\begin{quote}
(...\, yāvanty arthaśāstrāṇi pūrvācāryaiḥ prasthāpītāṁ prāyaścas tāṇi 

This single treatise on statecraft (arthasātra) has mainly been prepared by bringing together all treatises on statecraft composed by earlier teachers.
\end{quote}

It seems likely, then, that there were Bhāsyas, several of them, in the realm of statecraft already before Viṣṇugupta, and therefore before the composition of the Arthasāstra as we know it.

We will discuss the occurrence of bhāṣya in some Grhyasūtras in § 1.2.4, below. We will see that it is possible that these texts were acquainted with one or more Bhāsyas on statecraft, but more likely that they refer here to Patañjali’s grammatical Mahābhāṣya. The Nirukta, not being a Bhāṣya until later, was probably not referred to by this term.

The situation is further complicated by the fact that later grammarians (and Patañjali himself, as we have seen) sometimes use the singular bhāṣya to refer to a portion of the Mahābhāṣya, so that the Mahābhāṣya as a whole then becomes a collection of bhāsya, in the plural. This is probably illustrated in the following verse from Bhartṛhari’s Vākyapadīya (Vkp 1.23):

\begin{quote}
nityāḥ śabdārthasambandhāḥ tatra āmnātāḥ maharṣibhiḥ/ sūtrāṇām sānutentrāṇām bhāṣyāṇām ca pranētrbhih//
\end{quote}

The oldest commentary on the Vākyapadīya, the Vṛtti, appears to take it for granted that the Bhāsyas here referred to all designate the Mahābhāṣya.\footnote{The Vṛtti (ed. Iyer, p. 62 f.) gives only examples from the Mahābhāṣya, and may indeed have used the plural bhāṣyesu (this is the reading recorded by Vṛṣabhadeva, the surviving mss of the Vṛtti have bhāṣye; see Iyer 1966: 62 n. 25).} Even the plural use of the word bhāṣya may therefore conceivably refer to just one text, preferably Patañjali’s Mahābhāṣya.

The Mahābhārata refers to Bhāsyas, sometimes clearly in the plural, on a number of occasions. It never makes clear what kind of Bhāsyas are meant, but one passage suggests that, here at least, no grammatical Bhāṣya can be meant. In an enumeration of learned people it includes (Mhbh 13.90.26cd):

\begin{quote}
ye ca bhāṣyāvidaḥ ke cid ye ca vyākaraṇe ratāḥ

Those who know the Bhāṣya(s) and those who are devoted to grammar
This line suggests that “those who are devoted to grammar” are different from “those who know the Bhāṣya(s)”.

Consider next Mahābhārata 12.311.23. It speaks of Vyāsa’s son Śuka as “knowing the Veda(s), the Vedāṅga(s) and the Bhāṣya(s)” (vedavedāṅgabhāṣyavid). The proposal to interpret this in such a way that the Bhāṣya(s) cover (also) what we call statecraft is confirmed by the next verse, which enumerates “the complete Vedas, along with their secret parts and summersies, itihāsa in its entirety, and the sciences relating to the king (rājasāstra)”.

Both enumerations presumably cover all that is worth knowing, and this includes the “sciences relating to the king”, i.e., statecraft. Since this category is not covered by veda or vedāṅga, it is covered by bhāṣya. Rājasāstras are mentioned a number of times in the twelfth book of the Mahābhārata (I counted five), and once in the first (1.108.16). References to Bhāṣyas (in the sense of literary texts) are also centered in book twelfth (three occurrences), with one further occurrence in books two and thirteen each. Mahābhārata 12.308.15 describes King Janaka as “surrounded by ministers and in the midst of those who know all Bhāṣyas” (mantrībhir vṛtam/ sarvabhāṣyavidāṃ madhye ca); this suggests once again that all these Bhāṣyas had something to do with statecraft. Mahābhārata 12.104.43 counsels the king on how to proceed with regard to his vanquished enemies, in the following words:

Consider what things must be done with regard to your enemies in consultation with others who are experts in the Learned Teachings (śāstra), who are well prepared and understand the ordinances of those Teachings, who have been well instructed, who are well versed in what the commentaries (bhāṣya) have to say.

Once again, the Bhāṣyas referred to here can hardly be anything but texts dealing with statecraft. It seems safe to conclude that the Mahābhārata (or at least the passages we have considered) knew texts on statecraft, which it usually refers to as Bhāṣyas. The plural rājasāstrāṇi in verse 12.311.24 suggests that there were a number of treatises on statecraft, presumably Bhāṣyas, in existence at the time of composition of the Mahābhārata. About their contents, unfortunately, we have no information, apart from the fact that the composer of the extant Arthaśāstra may have used some or all of them.

I.2.4. Literature on domestic ritual

It is possible that the surviving Grhyasūtras are no older than the surviving Dharmasūtras, and belong to the period under consideration, i.e., more recent than Patañjali the author of Mahābhāṣya, with perhaps predecessors that preceded him. To

221 Mbbh 12.311.24: so ’dhīya vedān akhilān sarahasyān sasamgrahān/ itihāsam ca kārtsnyena rājasāstrāni cābhūho/
222 Mbbh 2.11.26, which mentions Bhāṣyas in a long and somewhat incoherent enumeration, does not allow us to make any plausible guesses as to their contents.
223 Mbbh 12.104.43: tathaiva cāṇyair atisāstravedibhiḥ, svaḷāṃkṛtaḥ śastraśivādānātṛṣṭibhiḥ/ suśikṣitair bhāṣyakathāvīśāradaiḥ, pāreṣu kṛtyān upadāhārayasva//. Tr. Fitzgerald.
224 This last passage also suggests that the term śāstra in the Mahābhārata may be primarily (if not exclusively) used to refer to texts of Political Science.
find out, three similar enumerations that occur in three different Gṛhyasūtras must be our point of departure.


Three items in particular merit our attention: the words sūtra and bhāśya occur in all three enumerations, the word mahābhārata in two of them. What do they refer to?

Since the above three enumerations occur in texts that call themselves Sūtras — Gṛhyasūtras to be precise — the presence of sūtra evokes fewer questions than bhāśya. There are many Bhāsyaś in classical Sanskrit literature; they usually accompany Sūtras. The combination sūtra + bhāśya would not therefore attract attention in a classical text. But these Gṛhyasūtras are para-Vedic texts, composed, we normally believe, before most Bhāsyaś. We must assume that at least one Bhāsya existed at the time of the Āśvalāyana, Kauśītaka, and Śāṅkhāyana Gṛhyasūtras. Which one or which ones?

It seems reasonable to narrow down the conceivable possibilities to three: (i) these three Gṛhyasūtras knew the Bhāsyaś on statecraft (or some of them) discussed in the preceding section, (ii) they knew Patañjali’s Mahābhāṣya, or (iii) they knew both of these. There are no a priori reasons to exclude the possibility that these Gṛhyasūtras knew Bhāsyaś on statecraft, but there is weak circumstantial evidence that they rather refer to the grammatical work.²²⁶ The most important reason to exclude Bhāsyaś on statecraft is that the subject matter of the Gṛhyasūtras (unlike that of the Mahābhārata) does not overlap with the concerns of statecraft. The Gṛhyasūtras — unlike the Mahābhārata and texts on statecraft — are primarily if not exclusively destined for internal consumption among Brahmins. There is, on the other hand, a certain overlap with linguistic concerns, both in the Gṛhyasūtras and in late-Vedic literature in general. Let us begin with the latter.

Late-Vedic literature contains the following strange enumeration, which occurs altogether four times in exactly the same form: three times in the Brhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad, once in the Maitrāyaṇīya Upaniṣad:²²⁷

²²⁵ Hopkins (1901: 390) concludes that “when the words [Bhārata and Mahābhārata] do actually occur [in the Gṛhyasūtras] they are plainly additions to the earlier list”.

²²⁶ This would correct Deshpande’s (2001: 38) claim to the extent that the list of Ācāryas in the Āśvalāyana Gṛhyasūtra — though including names like Aitareya, Kauśitaki and Śākalya — does not as yet include Pāṇini.

²²⁷ BĀrUp 2.4.10, 4.1.2, 4.5.11 (= ŚPaBr 14.5.4.10, 14.6.10.6, 14.7.3.11) and MaitUp 6.32.
Elsewhere (Greater Magadha p. 240 f.) I have discussed the sequence sūtrāny anuvyākhyānāni vyākhyānāni in this enumeration, and proposed that the expression anuvyākhyāna, which it is impossible to interpret, is the result of an early error of transmission; the term that it replaces may have been anvākhyāna. Once this emendation in place, the new sequence sūtrāny anuvākhyānāni vyākhyānāni can then be argued to refer to the sūtras of Pāṇini, the vārttikas of Kātyāyana and the explanations contained in the Mahābhāṣya of Patañjali, respectively. The uncertain and to some extent speculative nature of this interpretation cannot be denied, yet there is one relatively strong argument in its favour: it has no creditable competitor. And if a line from the early Upaniṣads may refer to Patañjali’s Mahābhāṣya, we cannot a priori exclude that some Grhyasūtras do the same. Let us therefore see whether the combination sūtra-bhāṣya in the three Grhyasūtras under consideration can be interpreted as referring to the Mahābhāṣya of Patañjali, presumably along with the Śūtra of Pāṇini?

A striking factor in its favour is that certain Grhyasūtras — among them Śāṅkhāyana and Kauṣītaka — are acquainted with technical grammatical terms. Most notably, some of them use the expressions kṛt and taddhita to designate primary and secondary suffixes: Śāṅkhāyana (1.24.4), Kauṣītaka (1.16.12-13), Pāraskara (1.17.2-3), Vārāha (3.1), and Gobhila (2.8.14-15).228 These terms do not occur in the Śrautasūtras, nor anywhere in Vedic literature. Acquaintance with grammatical literature is also suggested by the reference to the six āṅgas of the Veda in Pāraskara Grhyasūtra 2.6.6. These are traditionally śiksā, chandas, vyākaraṇa, nirukta, jyotiṣa and kalpa; among these, vyākaraṇa is grammar. Pāraskara Grhyasūtra 3.16, moreover, distinguishes between various kinds of sounds: guttural (kaṇṭhya), pectoral (aurasa), dental (danta) and labial (oṣṭhya). All this suggests that a number of Grhyasūtras were acquainted with linguistic literature. In combination with the explicit mention of sūtra and bhāṣya in some of them, we may consider that the suggestion that some of them knew Patañjali’s Mahābhāṣya is a possibility to be taken seriously.

If this suggestion is correct, the three Grhyasūtras considered were composed (or reached their final form) after Patañjali, and therefore after the second half of the second century BCE, say during the first century BCE or later. This would seem to agree with the mention of mahābhārata in two of them. However, there is a difficulty that may stand in the way.

The enumeration in Āśvalāyana Grhyasūtra 3.4.4 consists of two parts, the first one containing nominatives, the second accusatives. Oldenberg (1886: 220 n. 4) explained this in a footnote, following the commentator Nārāyana: “The names from Kahola Kauṣītaka[a] down to Āśvalāyana stand in the accusative; tarpayāmi, ‘I satiate N. N.’ is to be supplied.” The sūtra ends with the words: ye cānye ācāryās te sarve trpyantv iti “and whatsoever other teachers there are, may they all satiate themselves” (tr. Oldenberg). This concluding phrase suggests that the enumeration only contains the names of teachers. The vast majority of the names are indeed names of teachers, or can at any rate be understood that way. Oldenberg, in his translation, yet identifies six of them as being names of texts: “the Śūtras, the Bhāṣyas, the Bhārata, the Mahābhārata, … the

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228 These passages are about giving names to children, and have the following words in common: dvyaśkaraṁ caturyakaraṁ vā ghośavaddāyantarantasthāṁ kṛtaṁ kuryāṁ na taddhitam.
Šākala (text), the Bāškala (text)”. He is no doubt right in the case of Sūtra and Bhāṣya (even though grammar does not guarantee that the plural translation Sūtras and Bhāṣyas is justified: the words occur in the middle of a compound …sūrabhāṣya…). The remaining four words, however, — Bhārata, Mahābhārata, Šākala, Bāškala — can be used both for persons and for texts.229 This is even true of Mahābhārata, for the enumeration prefixes mahā- to a number of personal names: Mahākauśitaka, Mahāpaimingya, Mahaitareya, Mahaudavāhi. It follows that it is possible to raise doubts with regard to Oldenberg’s interpretation of these four names, especially in view of the context.

[The context admittedly contains some other elements which seem to point in the opposite direction: Sumantu, Jaimini, Vaiśampāyana and Paila are names known from the Mahābhārata: they are the names of four pupils of Vyāsa, the ‘author’ of the epic.]230

Remember in this context that the grammarian Pāṇini has a rule about the accentuation of the compound mahā-bhārata. This rule is P. 6.2.38 (mahān vr̥ihyaparāñgṛṣṭasyāṣajābālabhārabhāratahaśilhilarauravapravṛddheṣu). It is briefly discussed in Patañjali’s Mahābhāṣya, who does not however mention the compound mahā-bhārata. Since the form bhārata does not mention the beginning of the rule, and manuscripts of the Mahābhāṣya often cite only the beginnings of rules, it is conceivable that at the time of Patañjali this rule did not yet account for the accent of mahā-bhārata.231 A priori this seems unlikely, because it is hard to believe that someone more recent, who presumably lived at a time when accents had disappeared, would be concerned about the accent of this compound. It seems therefore reasonable to suppose that Patañjali, and presumably Pāṇini, knew the word mahā-bhārata.

Scholars have concluded that Pāṇini knew the (or an) epic that carries that name. A recent example is Asko Parpola, who concludes from this and other facts that “the war was over and the epic in existence by c. 400-350 B.C.”232 Alf Hiltebeitel (2011a: 113 n. 28) finds Pāṇini’s reference to mahā-bhārata ‘baffling’, and wonders whether he refers to some prewritten conceptualization — unless we have an older Mahābhārata text than most have thought …”. Fitzgerald (2010; 2010a: 72) conjectures that there were “oral traditions of a Pāṇḍava Bhārata epic that circulated in ancient North India between approximately 350 BCE and 50 CE”.

However, none of these assumptions are certain. Pāṇini’s rule leaves us in doubt whether the compound mahā-bhārata refers to the (or an) epic of that name, or to something else. This rule informs us about the accent of this compound, not about its reference. The word Bhārata can refer to various things, as any dictionary will tell. It can, for example, refer to the author of two RgVedic hymns. Mahā-Bhārata might then conceivably be a designation of the ‘great Bhārata’, a eulogistic expression for this Rṣi.233

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229 For Śākala as the name for a person see, e.g., Rgveda Prātiśākhya (ed. Müller 1869) 76 (p. XXV): ukārās cetikaranena yukto raktu ’prktu drāghitah sākalena “Und das u, wenn es mit iti verbunden, nasalisiert, ohne Consonanten, und vom Śākala verlängert ist, ist ebenfalls pragṛhya”; further Bronkhorst 1982: 89 n. 15.


231 So Simson 2011: 646-647.

232 Parpola 2002: 361; cited in Witzel 2005: 69 n. 168. Witzel adds that “exactly what kind of (Mahā)Bhārata may have been in existence in Pāṇini’s time is very much open to debate.”

233 This was indeed Albrecht Weber’s opinion: “In Pāṇini the word ‘Mahā-Bhārata’ does indeed occur; not, however, as denoting the epic of this name, but as an appellative to designate any individual of special distinction among the Bhāratas, like Mahā-Jābāla, -Hailihila …” (Weber
The passage from the Āśvalāyana Grhyāśūtra just studied might be interpreted along these lines. If so, it does not refer to the Mahābhārata epic.

There is another aspect of the question that must be considered. Pāṇini’s rule 6.2.38 determines the accent of the compound mahā-bhārata. This is not surprising if this expression concerns a Vedic seer, but somewhat harder to understand if it is the name of the Sanskrit epic. Let us see what authorities have to say about the disappearance of Vedic accents.


[Le sanskrit] perd un trait important, le ton, encore enseigné pour la langue parlée par Patañjali et encore prononcé par lui (pour les règles de ton il donne ses exemples en prononçant les mots accentués). Après lui le ton ne subsistera que pour les textes védiques appris par cœur selon les antiques méthodes de récitation. Cette perte est peut-être la marque d’un changement de statut du sanskrit. C’est la perte d’un trait particulièrement vivant de la langue et le signe de sa disparition à l’état de langue seconde, fruit d’une éducation spécifique, non réalisé au moment de sa naissance. En effet dans l’apprentissage d’une seconde langue la prononciation est la chose la plus difficile à acquérir à la perfection, précisément parce qu’il est malaisé de se débarrasser de traits de prononciation de sa langue maternelle. … Une altération de la prononciation aussi grave que la perte du ton chez les lettrés qui en connaissent l’existence et les règles par la grammaire de Pāṇini ne peut s’expliquer que par l’influence d’une langue première ne comportant pas de tonalité, et donc le passage du sanskrit à l’état de langue seconde. Quand ce changement s’est-il produit? Il n’y a pas de date ponctuelle pour cela, mais la transformation a dû se faire progressivement dans les premiers siècles après l’ère chrétienne.

Burrow (1973: 115) has similar ideas:

When exactly the accent died out in ordinary spoken use it is impossible to say with certainty. It was certainly a living thing in the time of Patañjali and even later than Patañjali, Śāntanava treated of the subject in his Pṛitiśūtra. According to the author of the Kāśikā commentary (c. A.D. 700) the use of accentuation was optional in the spoken language, which probably means that in practice it was no longer used at this time. On the whole it is unlikely that the use of accentuation survived long after the Christian era.

To sum up: No one knows for sure when the Vedic accent stopped being used in Sanskrit (and we are entitled to have doubts as to how ‘living’ the Vedic accent was at the time of Patañjali).234

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1878: 185). Weber is careful to add: “Still, we do find names mentioned in Pāṇini which belong specially to the story of the Mahā-Bhārata — namely, Yudhishṭhira, Hāṣṭinapura, Vāsudeva, Arjuna, Andhaka-Vrishṇayas, Drona (?); so that the legend must in any case have been current in his day, possibly even in a poetical shape”.

234 Contrary to a widespread misunderstanding, Patañjali did recite the Aṣṭādhyāyī with accents; see Appendix VII.
However, we do know that the Mahābhārata was not recited with accent. Indeed, the text itself describes the “recitation of Vedic texts with the accents taught by the Śīkṣas (svarah śāikṣah, 9.35[1][8].35b …)” (Brockington 1998: 10), indicating thereby that non-Vedic texts — including the Mahābhārata itself — were not recited in this manner. It is somewhat difficult to believe that a text in Sanskrit without accent had an accented name. We are of course free to speculate that there had been an earlier Mahābhārata in accented Sanskrit, with an accented name. Such speculation is not based on any evidence known to me, and is indeed unnecessary, given that the compound Mahā-Bhărata may refer to a Vedic seer.

There is no reason to insist that Pāṇini did not yet know the Mahābhārata in some form or other, but this is not certain. It seems however clear that the text as we now know it, or a text sufficiently similar to it, did not come into existence until the second or first century BCE.

Since, then, the mention of mahābhārata in some Grhyasūtras does not clinch the issue of a relatively recent date for these texts, let us consider some other passages, these ones in the Śāṅkhāyana Grhyasūtra. This Sūtra recognizes four Vedas.235 It concludes the description of the Sandhyā oblation with the remark (2.10.8): “He who approaches the fire after having sacrificed thus, studies of these Vedas one, two, three, or all.”236 It follows that all the Vedas are four in number. In other words, there are four and only four Vedas. This may not look surprising to a modern reader who has been trained to think that there are four Vedas: the Rg-, Yajur-, Sāma- and Atharva-Vedas. Early Indian literature, on the other hand, regularly speaks of three or five Vedas, and number four is more often than not different from the Atharva-Veda.237 In Vedic literature itself, the Atharva-Veda is primarily mentioned in texts belonging to that Veda itself (see below). Since the Śāṅkhāyana Grhyasūtra belongs to the Rg-Veda, we would not here expect an enumeration of Vedas that includes the Atharva-Veda.

The name that this Grhyasūtra gives to the Atharva-Veda is Brahma-Veda.238 This means that it looks upon the Atharva-Veda as the Veda of the priest called Brahman. Once again, this attribution is not very old. Various Vedic passages associate the Brahman-priest, not with the Atharva-Veda, but rather with the three earlier ones, or with the three kinds of formulas (Ṛc, Yajus, Sāman) that came to be collected in those other Vedas.239 There are even reasons to think that initially the Vedas claimed the position of Brahman each for itself.240 All this is understandable, for the Brahman supervises the Śrauta ritual, and is the only officiating priest (even though his part in the ceremony is

235 So does the Pāraskara Grhyasūtra (2.5.13). PārGS 2.10.4-7 mentions the Rg-, Yajur-, Sāma- and Atharva-Vedas.
236 Śāṅkhāyana Grhyasūtra 2.10.8: sa eteṣaṁ vedānāṁ ekaṁ dvau trīn sarvān vā 'dhīte ya evaṁ huvāṅnim upatiṣṭhate. Tr. Oldenberg.
237 See Bronkhorst 1989.
238 Śāṅkhāyana Grhyasūtra 1.16.3. The same passage, including the word brahmaveda, occurs in the Kausitaka Grhyasūtra (1.10.1). This text, which professes to belong to the same RgVedic tradition (Gonda 1977: 606-07), follows the Śāṅkhāyana Grhyasūtra, “during the greater part of the work, nearly word for word” (Oldenberg 1886: 6).
not obligatory) in the Grhya ritual.\textsuperscript{241} He has a special claim to being the purohita of the king.\textsuperscript{242}

For understandable reasons, the expression Brahma-Veda is one that, in Vedic and auxiliary literature, is virtually confined to texts of the Atharva-Veda, the Śānkhyāyana and Kauśitaka Grhyāūtras being the only exceptions to this rule. It occurs a number of times in the Gopatha Brāhmaṇa\textsuperscript{243} and is common in the Pārīṣṭas of this Veda.\textsuperscript{244} The Vaiśānaka Sūtra (1.1) speaks of the Brahman-priest as someone who knows the Brahma-Veda (brahma ... brahmavedavid). The link between the Brahman-priest and the Atharva-Veda finds further expression in the Gopatha Brāhmaṇa (1.2.18) and in the Kauśika Sūtra (94.2-4), which characterize him as bhrgvaṅgirovīd ‘knower of the Atharva-Veda’.\textsuperscript{245} The obvious conclusion is that the Śānkhyāyana and Kauśitaka Grhyasūtras accept that there is a special connection between the Brahman-priest and the Atharva-Veda.

We will return to the increased importance of the Atharva-Veda and of the Brahmans associated with it in § IIB.2. Here I will merely draw attention to a further passage from a Grhyasūtra that appears to highlight the link between the Atharva-Veda and worldly power. The Pāraskara Grhyasūtra (3.13.2; this Sūtra belongs to the White Yajurveda) describes a court of justice (sabhā) as āṅgirasī ‘related to Āṅgiras or to the Āṅgirases’. The link between the two is far from evident, unless we assume that the author of this Sūtra assumed that Atharvan priests had somehow a closer connection with the court than others. This, in its turn, may find its explanation in the fact that Brahman-priest came to be looked upon as particularly apt to play the role of royal purohita.

We had already occasion (§ I.2.2, above) to draw attention to the parallels between Śānkhyāyana Grhyasūtra and Mānava Dharmasāstra, and wonder whether these parallels indicate that the two texts are close to each other in time.

The Grhyasūtras contain very few indications that might help us to date them. In spite of that, the ones we have considered, though sometimes weak on their own, jointly point to a relatively recent date for these texts, and a date of composition after the collapse of the Maurya Empire must be considered possible or even likely for the forms in which they have reached us.

One might be tempted to go further. If, for example, the mention of mahābhārata can be taken to be a reference to the Sanskrit epic of that name, we might conclude that the Grhyasūtras concerned were composed (or reached their present shape) after the time when the epic, or a major part of it, was composed and written down. We might be tempted to draw conclusions from the fact that the enumerations in the three Grhyasūtras considered differ from each other: Śānkhyāyana has only sūtra-bhāṣya, Kauśitaka has sūtra-bhāṣya-mahābhārata, while Āśvalāyana has sūtra-bhāṣya-bhārata-mahābhārata. This might then lead us to believe that the Śānkhyāyana Grhyasūtra did not (yet?) know the Mahābhārata, that the Kauśitaka Grhyasūtra knew the Mahābhārata, and that the Āśvalāyana Grhyasūtra knew the Mahābhārata and a text called Bhārata (which may or

\textsuperscript{241} Gonda 1980: 194.

\textsuperscript{242} Here and in what follows I draw inspiration from Inden 1992.

\textsuperscript{243} The Gopatha Brāhmaṇa appears to be “a secondary treatise in the style of such a work” and is, moreover, more recent than the Śrautasūtra of that Veda (i.e., the Vaiśānaka Sūtra; see Gonda 1975: 355-356), which in its turn presupposes its Grhyasūtra (the Kauśika Sūtra; see Oldenberg 1892: xxx-xxxi, with p. xxxi n. 1; Gonda 1977: 545, 614).

\textsuperscript{244} Bloomfield 1899: 10.

\textsuperscript{245} bhrgvaṅgirovīd is another special term of the Atharvan tradition; see Bloomfield 1899: 10.
may not have been an earlier version of the *Mahābhārata*). This might then provide some reason to think that there was a time when Patañjali’s *Mahābhāṣya* existed, but not yet the *Mahābhārata*. I will resist this temptation, for it is beset by too many uncertainties. To begin with, the text-critical status of the Grhyasūtra editions leaves doubts as to the correct reading of the enumeration in the different texts. And even if the readings we have correspond to those of the “original” Grhyasūtras concerned, it is hazardous to conclude from the non-mention of the *Mahābhārata* that that epic did not yet exist at that time; this conclusion is all the more shaky in view of the fact that there is no obvious reason why a Grhyasūtra should mention the *Mahābhārata*. And let us not forget that there is no absolute certainty that the word *mahābhārata* in these Sūtras refers to the eponymous epic; it may refer to a person.

But even if the Grhyasūtras in the form in which they have reached us date from a time after the collapse of the Maurya Empire, this does not need to mean that this category of texts, and therefore the concerns to which they give expression, are as recent as that. Some remarks in Aśoka’s edicts suggest that he (or his helpers) may have been acquainted with texts dealing with the domestic issues that are central to the Grhyasūtras. This issue has recently been studied by Timothy Lubin (2013), who points out (forthcoming c) that in Rock Edict IX, Aśoka “mocks domestic rites of the type canonized in the Vedic Grhyasūtras — ‘good-luck rites’ (*maṅgalas*) associated with marriage and childbirth, and for warding off misfortune in illness and travel — as ‘numerous, diverse, vulgar, and pointless ceremonies’ propagated by women”. Lubin continues: “It is precisely such rites that the Grhya codes (sometimes in similar terms) seek to legitimize as a form of Vedic praxis. Where Aśoka criticizes rites of this type as the superstitions of women and other common folk, the Grhya codes explicitly validate the authority of women and lower classes in such matters. The late Vedic ritual codes thus elevated the very householder piety that an ascetic-inspired worldview tended to denigrate.”

1.2.5. The *Mahābhārata*

The *Mahābhārata* has been mentioned a number of times in the above discussion. We have seen that scholars tend to assign its first written version to the last two centuries preceding the Common Era, but that there is disagreement as to the portions of this huge text to which this applies. For this reason the present section is dedicated to a survey and analysis of the chronological position of this text. Since this discussion will take the Critical Edition as its point of departure, which supposedly reconstructs the archetype of this text, we begin with a general interrogation of what constitutes an archetype, followed by a discussion of what the archetype of the *Mahābhārata* may have looked like.\(^\text{248}\)

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246 Lubin adds in a note: “Such rites are likewise called *maṅgalāṇi* at Āpastamba *Grhyasūtra* 1.2.14-15; Āśvalāyana *Grhyasūtra* 1.7.1-2, though dignifying them with the label ‘rules’ (*dharmas*), calls them ‘motley’ (*uccāvaca*), as does Aśoka.”

247 See Lubin 2013: 37-38 for references from the Āpastamba *Grhya*- and Dharmaśūtra supporting this claim.

248 See also Fitzgerald 2010a: 74 ff.
Archetypes and autographs

Most Sanskrit texts reach us in the form of manuscripts. These manuscripts are more or less remote descendants of presumably one earliest manuscript, written by the original author or redactor of the text concerned. This earliest manuscript is called the autograph. It is only in exceptional cases that we possess autographs of Sanskrit texts, i.e., the original manuscript written by the original author or redactor himself. In the vast majority of cases all we have are copies of copies of copies ... of the original autograph. This is especially true of ancient texts, texts whose date of composition is too far removed from the present for manuscripts from that period to have survived.

Philologists have developed methods to get as close as possible to the lost autograph of texts with the help of the manuscripts that have survived. In order to do so they make intelligent use of the variants that always pop up in lineages of manuscripts. Each time a text is copied, the new manuscript will contain some mistakes, usually small ones, but also sometimes additions or modifications which the copying scribes knowingly and willingly introduced. Over the centuries this can lead to separate branches of manuscripts. A careful consideration of these branches, and of the ways in which they differ from each other, makes it sometimes possible to reconstruct the common ancestor of all surviving manuscripts. This common ancestor of all surviving manuscripts (or of all manuscripts used for a certain edition) is called their archetype.

Only in the case of a limited number of Sanskrit texts has it been possible to reconstruct the archetype of all or of a substantial number of surviving manuscripts. To some extent this is due to the fact that there are not sufficient scholars. Making a so-called critical edition — preferably with a ‘stemma’ (genealogical tree) of manuscripts and a reconstructed archetype — requires great skill and a substantial amount of work. Adds to the difficulties that many texts do not allow of such a reconstruction: their manuscripts do not belong to clearly separable lineages. This is most often due to the fact that an important number of scribes did not use just one manuscript each to copy from, but several. The surviving manuscripts are then ‘contaminated’ and disentanglement of their different strands is almost impossible.

In what follows we will concentrate on a few texts whose manuscripts do allow us to say something about the archetype from which they are descended. It will be shown that the archetype is often different from the autograph. Furthermore, the distance in time between autograph and archetype of surviving manuscripts can be considerable, centuries or more.

Vākyapadiya

Consider first a text from the fifth century CE, the Vākyapadiya of Bhartrhari. This text has been admirably edited by the German scholar Wilhelm (1977). even succeeded in establishing a stemma relating the manuscripts used. This stemma is almost too neat to be

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249 For a recent survey, see Witzel 2014.
250 Some of the following examples and others are referred to in Witzel 2014: 41, with references. See also Witzel 2014: 54: "It is my well-founded suspicion that many if not most of our ‘Classical’ Indian texts go back to late manuscript archetypes of ca. 1000 CE, that is to MSS written after the emergence of the various (sub)regional scripts around that time. Earlier (post-) Gupta MSS must have been copied and rewritten ... (sooner or later) in the new type(s) of script."
true, and certainly has few if any parallels in editions of other Indian texts. At present we are interested in the archetype it reconstructs. This, it turns out, is not the original text written down by Bhartrhari, but rather a mixture of Bhartrhari’s original text and some portions from an early commentary. As a matter of fact, the concluding verses of the second chapter in ‘s edition are in reality the concluding verses of the commentary known by the name Vṛtti, probably composed by someone else, perhaps a student of Bhartrhari. Here, then, we see that the archetype of the surviving manuscripts is not identical with Bhartrhari’s autograph of the Vākyapadiya.251

Mahābhāṣya

Patañjali’s Mahābhāṣya is another example. This text dates from the second half of the second century BCE, as we have seen (§ 1.2.1, above). There is no real critical edition of this text, and no stemma of manuscripts, but we do have an edition (by Kielhorn) that is based a fair number of manuscripts. It has been possible to show that all these manuscripts share some mistakes in Vedic quotations which can only have come about around the year 1000 CE, in northern India. It follows that these mistakes must belong to the archetype underlying all these manuscripts. This archetype can therefore be dated around the year 1000 CE at the earliest. It is separated from the autograph by a period of some eleven centuries!252

In this case, too, there is an explanation. As in the case of the Vākyapadiya of Bhartrhari, a commentary appears to play a crucial role. Around the year 1000 CE, in northern India, a commentary was composed on the Mahābhāṣya by someone called Kāiyata, which was to become the most popular and the most widely studied commentary on this text. Along with this commentary, subsequent scribes apparently adopted the Mahābhāṣya readings it accepted. Other lineages of manuscripts were henceforth neglected, so much so that, so far as we know, not a trace of them has survived.253

In both these examples it is possible to think in terms of a bottleneck: of all the manuscripts that existed only one became the ancestor of all those that have survived (or have been taken into consideration). However, neither in the case of the Vākyapadiya nor in that of the Mahābhāṣya do we have reason to think that only few manuscripts existed at the time of the archetype. Quite the contrary, there may have been many manuscripts in existence when the one manuscript was created which was to become the archetype of all manuscripts extant today. Seen this way, there may have been no real bottleneck.

Paippalāda Samhitā

Some texts may have gone through a real bottleneck, in the sense that only few manuscripts remained at a certain point of its history. An example may be the Paippalāda Samhitā of the Atharva-Veda. The manuscripts of this text, preserved both in Kashmir and in Orissa, go back to one written archetype from around 800-1000 CE in Gujarat.254 This, at any rate, is the theory presented by Michael Witzel (1985a), who offers the

251 Bronkhorst 1988: 111.
253 Bronkhorst 1987a.
254 Witzel (2014: 54 n. 274) speaks of “the written Paippalāda Atharvaveda archetype in Gujarat, c. 800 CE ..., from which even the current recitation in Orissa has been derived”.

following explanatory hypothesis: Brahmins of the Atharva-Veda were for many
centuries centered in Gujarat, from where some were invited from time to time by kings
in other parts of India. They arrived with their texts, i.e., the version of the Paippalāda
Samhitā current in Gujarat. Other traditions of that text either did not exist or were
overshadowed by the originally Gujarati tradition. In other words, it is possible that there
were only few manuscripts of the Paippalāda Samhitā in existence in that period, so that
we can then speak of a real bottleneck.

Mānava Dharmaśāstra

In order to illustrate another point, I wish to once again consider the Mānava
Dharmaśāstra, a text about which a great deal has already been said in § I.2.2, above. It
may be recalled that a critical edition of this text has recently been prepared, which does
not however include a stemma showing the relationship between the manuscripts. The
editor, Patrick Olivelle, could however present arguments to show that this work is
essentially a unitary composition, created by one single author. That is to say, there was
once an autograph of the Mānava Dharmaśāstra. However, this autograph is not identical
with the archetype of all presently available manuscripts, for Olivelle shows that a
number of passages in the text are clearly later additions, added some time after the
autograph and before the archetype. The Mānava Dharmaśāstra is in this way similar to
the texts we discussed earlier — the Vākyapadiya, the Mahābhāsy, the Paippalāda
Samhitā: in all these cases archetype and autograph are separated from each other by
some interval of time, in some cases a considerable interval of time.

However, the case of the Mānava Dharmaśāstra is different in another respect.
Unlike the other texts, this one was added to regularly. This is probably explained by the
type of text it is. Being a Dharmaśāstra, a Lawbook of sorts, it almost invited accretions,
new portions dealing with rules that are applicable in specific situations not, or not
sufficiently, dealt with in the original text. This process of accretions continued even after
the time of the archetype, as is clear from the addition of individual verses and minor
changes in the wording of verses detectable through ‘lower criticism’.²⁵⁵

Remember that the conclusion that autograph and archetype of the Mānava
Dharmaśāstra are different is based on an assessment of the relative coherence or lack of
it of portions of the text. This is obviously a dangerous argument. We know that
Christians over the ages have succeeded in finding coherence against all odds between
the books of the Bible, both the Old and the New Testament; this seems to be a good
illustration of the danger of assessing coherence and incoherence. In spite of this, we
often depend upon such assessments, and it appears that Olivelle has by and large done a
good job.

One more remark before we leave Manu. There is no compelling reason to assume
that the accretions added to this text during the period between autograph and archetype
have all been added in one go. It is easy to imagine that subsequent generations of scribes
added bits to one lineage of manuscripts. This process might have gone on until today,
had it not been for the fact that a certain manuscript of that lineage happened to become
the archetype of the now surviving manuscripts. The production of the archetype should
not then be thought of as a special event at which a new edition of the text was
consciously created. It is much more likely that the scribe who wrote the archetype had

²⁵⁵ Olivelle 2005: 51.
no idea that he was engaged in such a momentous enterprise. We may compare the situation with that of mitochondrial Eve, according to biologists the maternal ancestor of all women alive today. This woman was not aware of her role in history, and none of her contemporaries saw anything distinctive in her. The archetype of all surviving manuscripts of a text may be similar: just a manuscript whose special status was to be assigned to it by subsequent history.256

Archetype and autograph in the case of the Mahābhārata

These preliminary remarks have prepared us for an inspection of the Mahābhārata. This text, like the Mānava Dharmaśāstra and even more so, is susceptible to accretions. This is evident from the fact that this epic survives in different versions in different parts of India: these versions differ from each other primarily in the portions that have been added to an original kernel.

The Critical Edition of the Mahābhārata is in the first place the edition of the parts that these different Mahābhāratas have in common. That is to say, an important aspect of the preparation of this critical edition was the removal of those extras. What remains is the text that underlay these different versions, and that presumably corresponds to the archetype of the surviving manuscripts of the Mahābhārata.

The question that has to be addressed is: is this archetype identical with the autograph, or are the two different from each other? Autograph is a dubious term to use in connection with a text like the Mahābhārata. Scholars tend to agree that some form of the Mahābhārata was committed to writing during the last one or two centuries preceding the Common Era, but this earliest written form of the Mahābhārata may have been based on earlier material (an issue that does not interest us at present).257 It suffices to agree, if only for argument’s sake, that there was a first written version of the Mahābhārata, whether of parts or of the whole. I call this first written version its autograph, so as to facilitate comparison with the other texts we have considered. We wish to know whether this autograph and the archetype of the surviving manuscripts were identical or not.

Since the Mahābhārata is susceptible to accretions, the answer to this question is not without consequences. If time elapsed between autograph and archetype, the archetype is likely to contain passages that were not present in the autograph.

We know already that scholars tend to agree that the autograph of the Mahābhārata (in the sense just explained) belongs the last one or two centuries preceding the Common Era. One reason is a study of the datable events that the Mahābhārata is acquainted with. A survey leads Witzel (2005: 53-54) to “a post-Alexandrian, pre-Kṣatrapa, and pre-Kuśāna focus of the compilation of the bulk of the epic, perhaps ... c.

256 This is a reason to feel hesitant about the idea of a ‘normative redaction’, presumably compiled by redactors who knew what they were doing (Bigger 2002). See however further below.

257 Wynne’s remark (2009: xxxvii) to the extent that “[a]t the current state of research ... a critical edition of the Mokṣadharma [portion of the Mahābhārata] is probably not possible, since the period of thought in which its individual texts were composed remains obscure” must therefore be based on a completely different notion of what constitutes a critical edition. This does not change the fact that the continued independent existence of oral traditions (if there were any) that may have influenced subsequent written versions of the text may make the reconstruction of an archetype wellnigh impossible; cp. Witzel 2014: 33-34.
100 BCE.\textsuperscript{258}

Both possible answers to our question (autograph and archetype are identical or different) are represented in contemporary scholarship. Some maintain that the autograph of the Mahābhārata is also the archetype of the surviving manuscripts, others that the two are different. The arguments of those who claim that they are different are based, not surprisingly, on the further claim that the Mahābhārata is no homogeneous text, that it contains portions that just do not fit in with the rest. Those who think that the two are identical are attracted by claims that the whole text constitutes a coherent whole. How do we choose between these two positions?

Claims about the inner coherence or incoherence of a huge text are notoriously dependent upon personal judgments. Personal judgments can and do vary from one person to the next. Where one scholar sees coherence, another sees the opposite, and vice versa. To resolve this issue we need more than personal impressions.

External indications are not as helpful as one might wish. A copperplate inscription from the first half of the sixth century mentions the Mahābhārata and calls it the collection (saṃhitā) of a hundred thousand [verses].\textsuperscript{259} Since the text of the Critical Edition contains somewhat less than a hundred thousand verses, scholars have concluded that the archetype of the surviving manuscripts existed before that time. This is long after the probable date of the autograph. It leaves open the possibility of a long temporal distance between autograph and archetype, but does not prove it.

More promising is the study of the relationship between the Mahābhārata and the Māṇava Dharmaśāstra, which we carried out in § 1.2.2, above. It led us to the conclusion that some parts of the Mahābhārata appear to be older than the Māṇava Dharmaśāstra, whereas others are younger. This implies that the autograph of the Mahābhārata dates from before the Māṇava Dharmaśāstra, its archetype from a later date. Since the Māṇava Dharmaśāstra mentions gold coins, which did not gain currency until the 2\textsuperscript{nd} century of the Common Era, the autograph of the Mahābhārata may have existed before this date (a conclusion supported by the consensus of scholarly opinion), while its archetype is more recent.

\textit{Archetype and hyparchetype}

The above amounts to an argument in favor of separating autograph and archetype of the Mahābhārata. It depends in part on certain assumptions about the Māṇava Dharmaśāstra. There is a further argument in support of such a separation, presented some forty years ago by the German scholar Dieter Schlingloff (1969a) and based on his study of

\textsuperscript{258} See further Fitzgerald 2010: 109: “The commitment of the new Bhārata to writing and its becoming the Great Bhārata may have occurred under [the Brahmin Sūrgas and their brahmin Kānya successors in north-central and northeastern India], or one or both of these accomplishments may have been the work of Śātavāhana kings or even their eastern counterparts the Cedis of Kalinga”.

\textsuperscript{259} Fleet 1887: 135-139: “Khoh copper-plate inscription of the Maharaja Sarvanatha.” Date 533-34 CE. As in the other Sarvanatha inscription, but beginning: uktam ca Mahābhārāte śatasahasryāṃ saṃhitāyāṃ paramarśinā veda-vyāsena Vyāsena: pūravadattām dvijātibhyo etc. “... in the Śatasahasṛ-Saṃhitā ...” See § 1.2.2, above.

\textsuperscript{260} “over 160,000 lines of verse and more than 1,100 lines of prose” (Fitzgerald 2010a: 78, with a reference to Fitzgerald 2009[ : 106]).
fragments of the so-called Spitzer Manuscript. Carbon dating places this manuscript in the second to third century CE, which means that the text it contains dates from that period at the latest.261 It contains an enumeration of parvans (‘books’) of the Mahābhārata. A comparison of this list (or what is left of it) with the current list of parvans and sub-parvans led Schlingloff to the following results:262 “The first two parvans in the older list are Ādi and Pauloma, the latter is now a sub-parvan of the former. Aranyakā and Araneya were the seventh and eighth parvans respectively; the former is now the third parvan and the latter its sub-parvan (no. 44). Niryāna and Bhagavadyāna were the ninth and tenth parvans, they are now the fifty-sixth and fifty-fourth sub-parvans respectively. The Bhīṣmaparvan was the eleventh parvan and is now the sixth, Śāntiparvan was the fifteenth parvan and is now the twelfth; the Āśvamedhika was the sixteenth parvan and is now the fourteenth. The Anuśāsanaparvan is missing in the list and was probably not yet part of the epic. The Virāṭaparvan is also most probably a later interpolation.”

Schlingloff’s conclusions have been criticized by Alf Hiltebeitel in a passage that I will quote in full (2005: 459 n. 15):

Schlingloff’s … claims (1969) about the Mahābhārata’s “oldest extant parvan-list” based on the Kuśāṇa period “Spitzer manuscript” found in east Turkestan have been revived by Franco (2004), with some additional information and suggestions: that it may have come from “the Great Gandhara area” and been written using a broad-nibbed copper pen (vol. 1, 11); that it is probably a Sarvāstivādin text (19) from “around the second half of the third century” (33); that it included a refutation of God in one fragment (18–19); and that its reference to some Mahābhārata units and brief encapsulation of the Rāmāyana “may have been occasioned by a discussion of the Buddha’s omniscience” (17). If the last two things are true, it hardly seems that the Buddha’s omniscience was directed toward the ‘extant’ totality of either epic. Indeed, not knowing the context, we cannot know what the units were listed for, why both parvans and subparvans were selected, why in some cases they are apparently listed out of sequence and in others with one inclusive of another, why the Mahābhārata is digested by (selected) components and the Rāmāyana as a (minimalist) consecutive narrative, or even that the four fragments mentioning these features were all on the same page. No Mahābhārata scholar using the find as evidence of a once-shorter text … has tried to explain what kind of ‘Bhārata’ it would have been with the odd assortment of units mentioned. With such uncertainties, notions that the Virāṭa- and Anuśāsana-Parvans would not yet have been extant … must be taken cum grano salis. Regarding Book 4, the only evidence is that no Virāṭaparvan is mentioned between a unit beginning with a or ā, for which Schlinghoff (338) proposes ā(raneyam) “or perhaps ā(jaqara)” — both subparvans of Book 3 — and (ni)ravyān for the Abhiniryāna subparvan of Book 5. But a could provide a(jñātavāsa), the ‘residence incognito’ widely used to describe the Virāṭaparvan …, or a(bhimanyu-vivāha), the main adhyāya name (4.66–67) in Book 4’s concluding subparvan.

261 Franco 2005; Brockington 2010: 76.
262 As presented by Franco (2004: 9-10).
Let us grant that it is risky to derive detailed information from a lacunary manuscript, barely more than a collection of fragments. However, one argument cannot be easily dismissed. Fragment 66a in Franco’s edition (2004: 85) has

\((śā)nt[i]parvam 15 āśvamedhikam 1(6)\)

It is hard to deny that here two consecutive parvans of the Mahābhārata are enumerated. In the extant Mahābhārata these two are not consecutive: the Anuśāsanaparvan has its place between the Śantiparvan and the Āśvamedhikaparvan. That is to say, whatever the worth of Schlingloff’s other arguments, the Spitzer manuscript does suggest that the Anuśāsanaparvan was not yet part of the Mahābhārata at its time. Not even Hiltebeitel can think of a way to invalidate this particular (tentative) conclusion. The fact that the Anuśāsanaparvan does not figure in the list of parvans contained in the Harivaṃśa further strengthens this impression.

This tentative conclusion is, at first sight, supported by another factor that has not so far been considered. In order to appreciate it, a few words must be said about the way the Critical Edition of the Mahābhārata has been prepared.

The ‘purest’ version of the Mahābhārata — according to its chief-editor, V. S. Sukthankar — is found in manuscripts from Kashmir, in the Śaradā script. Dunham (1991: 3-4) says the following about them: “There is evidence … that the copyists of these Śaradā manuscripts were, on the whole, conservative in regard to additional passages and readings from non-Śaradā sources. While it is difficult to make precise comparisons it is nonetheless generally true that the Śaradā manuscripts present shorter versions of all the parvans for which they are extant. It was this characteristic of the manuscripts above any other which encouraged V. S. Sukthankar to declare the Śaradā version the textus simplicior in the [Critical Edition], and to regard it as ‘the best Northern version, and probably, taken as a whole, the best extant version’ (Ādiparvan, pp. xlviii, lvi).”

It is true that Sukthankar subsequently obtained and described (1938) a manuscript from Nepal covering (only) the Ādiparvan that presents an even shorter version of that portion of the Mahābhārata. It is equally true that Grünendahl (1993) has criticized Sukthankar’s editorial principles, most notably his attempt to associate a number of manuscripts (those covered by the letter K) with the Śaradā manuscripts. It is, finally, also true that recent investigations based on the cladistic analysis of parts of the Mahābhārata have raised doubts whether it will ever be possible to reconstruct a rooted cladistic tree, and with it an archetype. All this does not necessarily reduce the likelihood that the available Śaradā manuscripts themselves constitute the only surviving testimony of an early state of the Mahābhārata as a whole.

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263 For a detailed discussion of Hiltebeitel’s arguments, see Brockington 2010.
264 See Brockington 2010: 76, 82 f.
266 It is in this context of some interest to note that Vergiani (2009: 247) identifies “a well-defined family of mss [of the Kāśikāvrtti], all of them in Śaradā except [one manuscript] that seems to be a recent copy of the Śaradā original”. Vergiani continues: “This suggests that for centuries Kashmiri scholars handed down the text in a situation of relative isolation, which accounts for its relatively low amount of contamination with other lines of transmission.” He further refers to the work of Wendy J. Phillips-Rodriguez, who has come to a similar conclusion with regard to the manuscripts of the Dyūtaparvan of the Mahābhārata.
Śāradā manuscripts are rare. “There were only six located for use in the Critical Edition. These six do not provide a complete coverage of the Mahābhārata, as no Śāradā manuscripts of the Anuśāsanaparvan, Mausalparvan, Mahāprasthānikarpan, and Svargārohanaparvan have been found to date.”267 Three of these four books are small and unimportant. The Anuśāsanaparvan, on the other hand, is big (6536 stanzas according to Reich 1998) and constitutes all by itself almost a tenth of the whole epic. Its complete absence in the available Śāradā manuscripts requires an explanation.

A conceivable explanation might be that this book of the Mahābhārata was no longer copied in Kashmir out of lack of interest for its contents. This explanation is not very plausible in view of the fact that the Anuśāsanaparvan has undergone massive expansion, more than any other parvan of the Mahābhārata.268 The sometimes long additions, moreover, widely differ from each other. Indeed, as Tamar Reich points out in her dissertation (a part of which she kindly made available to me), the branching out of the recensions of the Anuśāsanaparvan was a very intense process in itself which took place after the establishment of a single common archetype. In other words, the Anuśāsanaparvan drew more attention to itself than any other parvan during the period following its archetype. The question is therefore, once again: why is there no Kashmirian version of this parvan?

I propose to combine the absence of Śāradā manuscripts of the Anuśāsanaparvan with the surprising jump in the Spitzer Manuscript, which skips that parvan.269 Both the Spitzer Manuscript and the early Mahābhārata belonged to northern India, so that it is at least possible that the author of that manuscript knew the Mahābhārata in a form close to the one preserved in Kashmir, i.e., without Anuśāsanaparvan.270

With few exceptions, most Mahābhārata scholars will accept the conclusion that the Anuśāsanaparvan is a later addition. Many had reached this conclusion on the basis of its contents.271 I will merely cite a passage from Winternitz’s A History of Indian Literature, already cited by Schlingloff (1969a: 338): “While Book XII [the Śāntıparvan], even though it did not belong to the original epic, yet was probably inserted at a comparatively early date, there can be no doubt with regard to Book XIII [the Anuśāsanaparvan], that it was made a component part of the Mahābhārata at a still later time. It bears all the marks of a later fabrication. Nowhere in the Mahābhārata, to mention only one thing, are the claims of the Brahmans to supremacy over all other strata

268 See Austin 2011 for general reflections about the significance of post-CE additions.
269 The absence of the Anuśāsanaparvan from the list of parvans given in the Harivamśa should also be kept in mind; see above.
270 Cp. Fitzgerald 2006: 270 n. 15: “The Kushana-period Spitzer manuscript’s partially legible list of Mahābhārata parvans is strong evidence that there did exist written versions of the [Mahābhārata] quite different from the one uncovered in the course of the critical Pune edition of the [Mahābhārata]. Evidently the tradition uncovered by Sukthankar and his colleagues eclipsed fairly thoroughly the version of the epic known to the Spitzer manuscript.”
271 Brockington (2010: 83) makes the following specification: “The absence of the Anuśāsanaparvan in both lists [i.e., in the Spitzer Manuscript and in the list of parvans in the Harivamśa, JB] is fully in accord with what I consider to be its late inclusion within the Mahābhārata on grounds of both language and subject matter. I would not, however, exclude the possibility that the substance of the final two adhyāyas of the present Anuśāsanaparvan … formed the conclusion of an originally much shorter Śāntıparvan, to which the first few verses of [Mahābhārata] 12.47 could once have provided a lead-in.”
of society vindicated in such an arrogant and exaggerated manner as in Book XIII.”

If we accept the combined evidence of Spitzer Manuscript and Śāradā manuscripts as interpreted here, would it follow that autograph and archetype of the Mahābhārata must necessarily be different from each other? It would not. It would merely allow us to think that the Anuśāsanaparvan was not part of the archetype, and that its inclusion in the Critical Edition of the Mahābhārata was strictly speaking not justified. It would also support Sukthankar’s editorial decision to pay special attention to the Śāradā manuscripts. It would further suggest that the archetype of the Mahābhārata (which did not include the Anuśāsanaparvan, and perhaps much else) is older than the Spitzer Manuscript, and would therefore presumably date from before the second or third century, say from before 200 CE.

I am aware of the somewhat shaky nature of these conclusions. What, for example, if the author of the Spitzer Manuscript knew only the regional variant of the Mahābhārata from Kashmir, which never added the Anuśāsanaparvan, as we have come to suspect? And what if, contrary to our hypothesis, the Śāradā version of the Mahābhārata once did contain the Anuśāsanaparvan, a portion which then for reasons unknown to us did not survive? A priori we cannot exclude these possibilities, but I would argue that they are improbable, so much so that it is worth our while to further explore the idea that the archetype of the Mahābhārata did not contain the Anuśāsanaparvan. In that case we would wish to know what the real archetype of the surviving manuscripts looked like. But it would then also be clear that every attempt to reconstrue this earlier archetype would confront us with major difficulties. The Śāradā manuscripts would inevitably play a major role in such a construction. These manuscripts, as we saw, do not contain three further books — the Mausalaparvan, Mahāprasthānikaparvan, and Svargārohanaparvan — but would this really justify us to exclude these books from the critical text? The limited number of Śāradā manuscripts, and the absence of corroborative evidence, would make this a difficult and risky decision. We also saw that “it is … generally true that the Śāradā manuscripts present shorter versions of all the parvans for which they are extant”. The implications of this would have to be investigated in detail for all the books of the Mahābhārata.

This task would no doubt be time-consuming, but its results could turn out to be rewarding. However, even before, and without, carrying out this task, some further tentative conclusion may be drawn from our reflections so far. It would seem that, in rough approximation, we can usefully speak of an archetype and a hyparchetype of the text. Assuming that the editors of the Critical Edition did a good job by and large, most of the manuscripts derive from a hyparchetype that contained the Anuśāsanaparvan and much else that had no place in the earlier archetype. This earlier archetype is known to us from only a handful of manuscripts, mainly or exclusively in the Śāradā script. The hyparchetype, on the other hand, underlies virtually all manuscripts with the exception of

272 It may be relevant in this connection to point out that there is a Kashmir recension of the Bhagavadgītā that at least in certain respects appears to be superior to its vulgar recension. See Katō 2014: 1144, with a reference to van Buiten 1965.

273 It may yet be significant that the Mausalaparvan, the Mahāprasthānikaparvan and the Svargārohanaparvan are the final books of the Mahābhārata, and that Brockington (1998: 155) says the following about them: “The remaining three books are all generally regarded as being late and in any case are extremely short, all containing less than ten adhyāyas; indeed, it is most likely that they have been treated as separate books only at a very late date, in order to produce the significant number 18 for the total of the books.”
this handful.

Whatever the position we take with regard to the archetype, we are still confronted with the extraordinary success of the hyparchetype. How did this hyparchetype, to which the Anuśāsanaparvan and much else had been added, succeed in imposing itself on the manuscript traditions to the extent that only a handful of Śaradā manuscripts reveal to us that there was an earlier archetype?

Once again, I am not in a position to propose a certain or even very likely answer to this question. We saw that archetypes can owe their success to various causes, the composition of a popular commentary being prominent among them. Among other explanations that have been proposed, one is the intervention of a centralized political power, and it is true that the Gupta empire would conceivably fit the bill in the case of the Mahābhārata. The Gupta empire united much of northern India during the fourth and fifth centuries CE. This is later than our postulated archetype, as it should be. The question as to how the Gupta rulers went about imposing one particular version of the Mahābhārata at the expense of others remains however open.\(^\text{274}\) This imposition must have been so successful that even future copyists would no longer copy other versions than this one, which is a major feat indeed.\(^\text{275}\)

Autograph and archetype

At this point we have to confront the crucial question: Is it possible that the archetype of the Mahābhārata (to be distinguished from the hyparchetype, as explained above) is identical with its autograph, i.e. with its earliest written version? This reconstructed archetype will obviously be a much leaner text than the one reconstructed in the Critical Edition, being without Anuśāsanaparvan and much else. But would it be identical with the autograph?

At this point we must consider a piece of evidence that may have a bearing both on the question whether autograph and archetype of the Mahābhārata were identical, and on the one that concerns the extent to which the hyparchetype had been able to replace competitors in the fifth century CE. This piece of evidence has been brought to light by Ashok Aklujkar and presented in a lecture (“Language philosophy in the Mahābhārata”) at the Brown Conference on Early Indian Philosophy in the Mahābhārata (April 2010).\(^\text{276}\) Briefly, Aklujkar shows that the ancient Vṛtti on Bhartṛhari’s Vākyapadīya — both of which appear to belong to the fifth century CE — quotes, under Vkp 1.159-179,\(^\text{277}\) a passage from the Āśvamedhikaparvan of the Mahābhārata (14.21) in a form that appears

\(^{274}\) An example of a text that was reworked several times and tells us so is the Carakasamhitā, a medical text: an original work by Agniveśa was revised by Caraka, and to the result Dr̥tabala subsequently added a number of chapters. Unlike the compositions considered in our main text, all surviving manuscripts of the Carakasamhitā go back to an archetype that was close to Dr̥tabala’s autograph (Maas 2010). The texts of Agniveśa and Caraka have left no traces except through the intermediary of Dr̥tabala’s version.

\(^{275}\) One might in this case think of a ‘normative redaction’ (Bigger 2002), but reserve this expression not for the archetype but rather for the hyparchetype including the Anuśāsanaparvan.

\(^{276}\) And, it appears, at the Indian Institute of Technology, Bombay, in 2013; see https://www.iitbombay.org/iitb_dean_acr/december-newsletter-2013/Prof%20Ashok%20seminar.pdf

to be older and more original than what we find in the Critical Edition (and in all the mss used for this edition, which includes one Śaradā ms from Kashmir). This suggests that in the fifth century there was at least one version of the Mahābhārata in circulation that was not derived from the hyparchetype, nor indeed from the archetype. If so, this version must be a descendant of a manuscript that was closer to the autograph than the archetype, which would then prove that autograph and archetype were indeed different from each other.\footnote{Fitzgerald’s observation to the extent that “the tradition uncovered by Sukthankar and his colleagues eclipsed fairly thoroughly the version of the epic known to the Spitzer manuscript” (quoted above) would in this case be even more applicable with regard to the version of the Mahābhārata known to the author of the Vṛtti.}

We are still left with many uncertainties. However, hopefully some elements have been added to the ongoing discussion whether the autograph and the archetype of the Mahābhārata were identical. One of these new elements is the notion of a double archetype; more precisely of an archetype without and a hyparchetype with the Anuśāsanaparvan. The second new element is a piece of evidence that might be used as an argument to show that the archetype and the autograph were not identical.

These proposals have, admittedly, a somewhat speculative character. They are not, however, mere imagination run wild. Both of them may be susceptible to further confirmation, or indeed refutation. This, however, is a challenge for future research.

\textit{Pāṇini and the Mahābhārata}

There is a growing consensus that the Mahābhārata — i.e. presumably that what we have called its ‘autograph’ — was composed after the collapse of the Maurya Empire and before the year zero.\footnote{So Fitzgerald 2006; Hildebeitel 2001: 18.} This is in agreement with the date that Witzel (2005: esp. p. 54) arrives at on the basis of the combined evidence dealing with foreigners and that of foreign loanwords in the text: around 100 BCE. The one argument that could be raised against it is that Pāṇini knows the expression mahābhārata. However, it is far from certain that we can conclude from this that Pāṇini knew a text called Mahābhārata, and even less certain that this was the text we know under this name. This we have seen in § I.2.4. Without further evidence, there is therefore no need to modify our estimate of the date of the Mahābhārata’s ‘autograph’.

\textbf{I.2.6. Literature on phonology}

One of the most striking features of Brahmanism is that it maintained a tradition of oral recitation able to preserve Vedic texts from time immemorial. This tradition, we must assume, was in place and had been in place for a long time during the period that we are considering. It seems, however, that something changed during that period. Concern to preserve the texts in their phonologically correct form gave rise to treatises on phonology. By and large they fall into two categories: Prātiśākhyas and Śiksās. The former of these two — as their name indicates: pratiśākhām means "for every śākhā ‘branch’ of the Veda" — are closely associated with specific Vedic texts. By and large
the (surviving) Prātiśākhyas are older than the (surviving) Śikṣās, so for our chronological claim it suffices to consider the Prātiśākhyas.

Prātiśākhyas are not just phonological treatises. Apart from concern with phonology in the narrow sense, they specify how separate words of the Vedic text they deal with are joined in sandhi. In other words, they show how a word-text (Padapātha) becomes a joined text (Saṃhitāpātha). They presuppose these two versions of the text. We must briefly consider these versions, and in particular the oldest Padapātha, that of the Rgveda. This is perhaps the earliest ‘linguistic’ text that has survived; it was already known to Pāṇini. Old as it may be, it is a complete riddle why someone created this version of the Rgveda. In itself, it does not help the preservation of the text. It can of course be used to reconstruct the text-with-sandhi by applying appropriate rules, but what purpose could that serve? Vedic texts are not preserved through reconstruction, but through memorization. At first sight this version of the Rgveda strikes one as serving no purpose whatsoever.

The very existence of the Padapātha is therefore a puzzle. Attempts have been made to solve it, but with few definite results. One of the solutions proposed sees in the Padapātha the Rgveda in written form; words are regularly separated in writing, whereas they are not in oral presentations. Another suggestion is that the Padapātha was not originally written down, but composed under the influence of written texts. A third suggestion is that the Saṃhitāpātha and the Padapātha "could go back to a sort of didactic game"; the two subsequently drifted apart and were finally reunited again. One might add a fourth conjecture: the importance attributed to Vedic words (see § IIA.4.3, below) created the need to know which words actually occur in the Veda; without dissolving the sandhi this was not obvious.

I myself have long ago made the proposition that the Padapātha was the Rgveda in written form. I have subsequently realized that this suggestion is confronted with difficulties for which I have no answer at present, most notably the evidence that seems to suggest that there was no writing in India before the time of Pāṇini. I no longer insist on this particular solution for the puzzle that the Padapātha presents, but do not withdraw it altogether: it remains a possibility to be kept in mind in future research.

Quite independently of the question whether the Padapātha was originally the written version of the Rgveda, the comparison of Padapātha and Saṃhitāpātha brings to light some interesting differences. It appears that the Padapātha (as we have it) is older

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280 Witzel 2011; see esp. p. 506: “the canonization of the Vedas (e.g., involving the first formation of pada texts ...) ... can ... be pictured as secondary effects of the initial introduction of literacy into India via Gandhāra during the early Persian era.” Houben & Rath 2012: 31: “Could it ... be that the idea for the creation of an oral word-for-word version of the Rgveda in order to appropriate some features of writing and to improve the quality of the transmission of the Rgveda was born in 6th cent. BCE Gandhāra, two centuries before Pāṇini could write his grammar in the same region? Could the ‘Padapātha-like form of the Avesta’ be due, not to the influence of Indian grammatical thought as Scharfe 2009 suggested, but to the influence of the same script (or scripts, old-Persian cuneiform and/or Aramaic) on the transmitters of the Avesta ...?”

281 Falk 2001a, esp. p. 198-199.

282 See however § IIA.3, below. Note here that I do no longer insist that the Padapātha must have been written in Brāhmī script; Scharfe’s (2002: 10-11) attempts to show that this script was not created for writing Vedic texts are therefore irrelevant in this context.
than the Samhitāpātha (as described in the Rgveda Prātiśākhya). Pāṇini fits somewhere in between: he knew the Padapātha, but applying his rules of sandhi leads in certain cases to a text that is older than the Samhitāpātha.

We learn from Yāska's Nirukta (6.28) that the Padapātha of the Rgveda was composed by Śākalya. On the basis of the Padapātha alone, it is difficult if not impossible to determine exactly what form the Rgveda had at his time. Fortunately, Pāṇini preserves on some occasions Śākalya's opinion as to what sandhi should be applied. The following case is particularly revealing. It has long been known that RV 1.164.8 Sp. dhīty agre and RV 1.20.4 Sp. viṣṭi akrata replace original dhīti agre and viṣṭi akrata; see, e.g., Wackernagel 1896: 322; Kuiper 1955: 256. The Padapātha has dhīti/ agre and viṣṭi/ akrata, and is therefore wrong in that is does not represent the original form of the text. This does not, however, mean that the text which Śākalya had before him was wrong. A lucky coincidence enables us to reconstruct that text. Pāṇini's grammar preserves a rule which says: "[In the opinion] of Śākalya, in connected speech (samhitā), no single [substitute] of what precedes and what follows [comes] in the place of [the vowels] i, ī, u, ū, r, ṛ, l, when a dissimilar vowel follows; and [if the earlier vowel is long] a short [vowel comes in its place]" (P. 6.1.127: ikō 'savarne śākalyasya hrasvaś ca [samhitāyām (72), ekah pūrvaparayoh (84), na (115), aci (125)]; cf. Greater Magadha p. 335-336). With the help of this rule it becomes clear that the text of the Rgveda known to Śākalya read dhīti agre and viṣṭi akrata at the places indicated above. This shows that Śākalya, even where he wrongly analyzed the text, knew this text in a form that was in many points more archaic than the surviving Samhitāpātha.

We get immediate information about the text of the Rgveda known to Śākalya where the Padapātha does not give an analysis. This happens in the case of reduplicated verbs and certain compounds (as shown below). It appears that Śākalya's text showed no retroflexion of n and s where the conditioning sound occurs in the reduplication of a verb or in the earlier member of a compound. The surviving Samhitāpātha has almost throughout retroflexion in such cases. Examples illustrating the above are: Pp. sosavīti, Sp. sosavīti (RV 3.56.7); Pp. sisakti, Sp. sisakti (RV 1.56.4 etc.); Pp. tustuvuh, Sp. tustuvuh (RV 8.6.12 etc.); Pp. tishtiṁata, Sp. tiṣṭhipat (RV 1.162.20); further Pp. madhusut' tama, Sp. madhuvat tama (RV 3.58.9); Pp. nisiktapā, Sp. nisiktapā (RV 7.36.9); Pp. duṣṭara, Sp. duṣṭara (RV 3.24.1 etc.); Pp. taisṭubha, Sp. taisṭubha (RV 1.164.23 etc.); Pp. varṣa' nirnij, Sp. varṣanirnij (RV 5.57.4); and many others.

As is well known, the Padapātha gives an analysis of the text of the Rgveda where this is indicated with the help of a danda (/) or an avagraha ('). I shall argue that the Padapātha analyzes only here, and not where this is not indicated by a danda or avagraha.

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283 Strictly speaking, the Rgveda Prātiśākhya does not describe ‘our’ Rgveda, but the version of the Śāśiśiriya Śākhā; see Appendix VI.

284 Apart from the arguments below, see also Greater Magadha Part V, Appendix IV.

285 Pāṇini also sometimes differs from Śākalya in his analysis; see Cardona 2012: 58: “[Pāṇini] considered critically the work of his predecessors in the light of his own system as reflected in the Aṣṭādhīyā.” Cardona states elsewhere (2007: 705): “I think anyone who considers seriously Pāṇini in relation to his predecessors would have to conclude that he did much more than merely reorganize and make systematic the work which he inherited from these predecessors, that he rethought much of what had been done and in several major aspects departed from this earlier work in a manner which is little short of revolutionary.”

286 See Abhyankar 1972: 214 n. 1.
For this purpose we look at Sp. nīrṇīj. This is analyzed as Pp. niḥ’nij (RV 5.62.4 etc.). This same word often occurs in larger compounds. Since the Padapātha never uses more than one avagraha in the analysis of one compound, this word is now given as -nīrṇīj, without avagraha, and also without retroflex n! Instances are: RV 1.167.3 Sp. hiranyanirṇīj, Pp. hiranya’nirṇīj; RV 8.8.11 Sp. sahasranirṇīj, Pp. sahasra’nirṇīj; RV 5.57.4 Sp. varṣanirṇīj, Pp. varṣa’nirṇīj; etc. There can be no doubt that -nīrṇīj is the result of applying sandhi to niḥ’nij, and cannot be looked upon as an analyzed form. Applying sandhi to niḥ’nij did not, apparently, lead to retroflexion of the second n!

There is another group of cases that support the view that the above examples are not to be considered the result of analysis. The locative plural ending su is as a rule separated from its stem by an avagraha in the Padapātha: Pp. kārma’su, Sp. karmasu (RV 8.38.1 etc.); Pp. mahat’su, Sp. mahatsu (RV 1.81.1 etc.). Where, however, s is replaced by retroflex ś, no avagraha separates this ending from the stem, and retroflex ś appears also in the Padapātha: Pp. śmaśrṣu (RV 2.11.17); śatruṣu (RV 9.19.6); viṣu (stem viṣ; RV 1.45.6 etc.); raśmiṣu (RV 1.134.4). The author of the Padapātha considered it apparently necessary to indicate the retroflexion of s in cases like śatruṣu, and in order to achieve this he went to the extent of deviating from his procedure of separating -su from its stem by an avagraha. In cases like sisakī he could have given retroflex ś without having to deviate from any procedure. That he did not do so makes it very probable that in his text these forms had no retroflex ś.

More widespread retroflexion came to be introduced in the text, but this appears to have sometimes given rise to differences of opinion. Aitareya Āranyaka 3.2.6 and Śāṅkhāyana Āranyaka 8.11 state that if one is in doubt whether or not n must be used, then n must indeed be used; if one is in doubt whether or not s must be used, then s must indeed be used. In the same chapters these two books speak about Śākalya, which shows that they are younger than the Padapātha of the Rgveda.

Widespread retroflexion is a characteristic that distinguishes Sanskrit from Iranian and other Indo-European languages (see, e.g., Renou 1956: 9, 16; Burrow 1955: 95; 1971). The above evidence suggests that at as late a date as the composition of the Rgveda Padapātha, retroflexion as a result of sandhi did not yet, so to say, cross certain boundaries: the boundary between the reduplication and the stem of a verb, and the boundary between the members of a compound. Retroflexion as a result of internal sandhi — as in śatruṣu, see above — existed in Śākalya’s time and was known to him.

The Rgveda Padapātha contains a small number of troubling cases, which belong together. They are: Pp. duḥ’daḥba, Sp. daḷaḥba (RV 2.28.8 etc.); Pp. duḥ’ḍhī, Sp. dūḍhī (RV 1.94.8 etc.; only declined forms occur, wherein dh is followed by y, so that dh is not replaced by ḷ); Pp. duḥ’naśa, Sp. dūṇaśa (RV 3.56.8) and dūṇaśa (RV 7.32.7 etc.). Let us look at the first case. It is clear that the form corresponding to Pp. duḥ’daḥba should be expected to be *durdabha (cf. Pp. niḥ’nij, Sp. nirnij). The relation between *durdabha and daḷaḥba must then be considered to be one of development in time, from *durdabha to daḷaḥba. A development of this type has been claimed for cakravāda (besides

287 The only exception may be RV 1.100.16 Pp. dhūḥ’su, Sp. dhūṛṣu. Did Śākalya have dhūḥsu in his Rgveda?
288 Cf. Greater Magadha, Appendix IV.
289 All retroflex consonants are represented in the Padapātha: apart from ś, we find t (e.g. kāte, RV 1.106.6), ṭh (e.g. jathara, RV 5.34.2), ḍ (e.g. ṛmḍa, RV 1.104.8), dh (e.g. vividdhi, RV 1.27.10), n (e.g. kāne, RV 10.155.1), and of course ḷ and ḷh, which replace ḍ and dh (see Appendix VI, below).
cakravāla, Pāli cakkavāla) from *cakravarta (Mayrhofer 1951: 55; the related form *cakravartin survived in Classical Sanskrit). However, such a development is not unproblematic. Forms like duūlabha are generally held to have developed directly out of *duḍabha, without the intervention of *durdabha. This tempts us to believe that *durdabha had come into the Rgveda known to Śākalya as a result of a "puristic countermovement" (cf. Kuiper 1968: 87-88). It would in this case be remarkable that such puristic forms existed already at such an early date. Another possibility would be to assume that Śākalya analyzed duūlabha into duh’dbha. This I consider the least acceptable alternative of all. The Padapātha of the Rgveda never gives anything but analyses that can be undone by simple rules of sandhi.290 And where no such simple rules should be used, iti is added as an indication to that effect (cf. Jha 1975). It seems hard to believe that Śākalya should deviate from his procedure in the above three cases, where he could have easily left them unanalyzed.

It should be clear from the above that the Padapātha of the Rgveda preserves some archaic features that have not been preserved in its Samhitāpātha. This agrees with our earlier observation that the Padapātha is older than the Samhitāpātha. Pāṇini has to be situated between these two, because on one hand he knows the Padapātha, and on the other applying his rules of sandhi leads to a text-with-sandhi that is metrically closer to the original.

Something must be said about the Kramapātha of the Rgveda. The Kramapātha is a special combination of Padapātha and Samhitāpātha. If the Kramapātha is based on the Samhitāpātha codified in the Rgveda Prātiśākhya, it must be younger than that Samhitāpātha, and therefore younger than Pāṇini. Some further evidence supports this conclusion, but Pāṇini’s grammar contains a puzzling rule that suggests the opposite. Let us look at both.

The Kramapātha of the Rgveda is described in chapters 10 and 11 of the Rgveda Prātiśākhya. These chapters indicate how to arrive at the Kramapātha on the basis of the Padapātha and the Samhitāpātha. The relationship between chapters 10 and 11 is peculiar. Chapter 11 restates much that is said in chapter 10 and adds explanations as well as alternatives proposed by others.291 Already Müller (1869: CCXLVI; cf. Shastri 1959: 76) concluded from this that chapter 11 is a supplement to chapter 10, the main aim being to give reasons for the rules of chapter 10. But the search for reasons, Müller observes, led to something else. Where the presumed rationale of certain rules was not fully attained by these rules, new rules were added or modifications proposed. It is yet clear that the author of chapter 11 knew a traditionally handed down Kramapātha. Certain śūtras indicate this. Śūtra 11.8 (620) questions the rationality of some features of the Kramapātha, thus indicating that the Kramapātha existed in a fixed form even where this was considered irrational. Śūtras 11.63-65 (675-76) are quite explicit on this point: "But one should not go beyond what is customary. While saying that both tradition and reasoning are the way of the Kramapātha, one should praise other [rules regarding the formation of the Kramapātha only in as far as they are] in agreement with its (i.e., of the Kramapātha) completion. The rules of the Kramapātha are correct as they were taught in

290 Most of these cases are accounted for by vārttika 5 on P. 6.3.109: duro dāśanāśadabhadhyesu. But this is clearly an ad hoc rule made for these few cases. The Rgveda Prātiśākhya deals with these forms in sūtra V.55 (371).
the beginning, but not with all kinds of deviations [therefrom]. Thus Bābhravya, the propounder of the Kramapātha, propounded and praised the Kramapātha." (ācaritaṁ tu notkramet/ kramasya vartma smrtisambhavaṇu brauṇa samādhim asyānveh itārāni kārtayet// yathopadiṣṭam kramaśāstram ādīṭaḥ pūnāḥ prthakvair292 vividhaṁ naśādhuvaṁ/ iti prabābhravya uṣāca ca kraṃaṃ krama-pravaktaḥ prathaṃ saṃsāra ca// RPr 11.63-65.) We may conclude that chapter 10 of the Rgveda Prātiśākhya describes the Kramapātha as it was traditionally handed down and, perhaps, as it was at the time of its composition.

Some features of the Kramapātha as described in chapter 10 of the Rgveda Prātiśākhya allow us to gain knowledge about the stage of retroflexion in the Samhitāpātha. Sūtra 10.3 (592) tells us that "they finish [a group of words joined in the Kramapātha] having passed over ... su and sma when retroflexed and followed by nah" (nate susmeti nahpare ... aṭītyaitāṇy avasyanti). In these cases the Kramapātha contains groups of three rather than two words.293 The examples given by the commentator Uvātha are: mo su nah (RV 1.38.6); āsu śmā nah (RV 6.44.18). For sma there are no further examples; for su there are, such as: ī su nah (RV 1.36.13); o śū nah (RV 1.138.7); te śu nah (RV 1.169.5); mo śu nah (RV 1.173.12); etc. It is clear why in these cases three rather than two words form a group. Retroflexion of s in the second word is conditioned by the first word, the second word — thus modified — causes in its turn retroflexion of n in nah. Retroflexion in the third word is therefore (indirectly) conditioned by the first word. Groups of two words at a time would not show the Samhitā-form nah,294 contrary to what the Kramapātha intends to accomplish. This shows that at the time of composition of the Kramapātha, the Samhitāpātha read mo su nah, āsu śmā nah,295 with retroflex s and n. In this respect the Kramapātha agrees with the Rgveda as described in the Rgveda Prātiśākhya.

Pāṇini, as we have seen, is to be dated after the Padapātha and before the Rgveda Prātiśākhya. Indeed, Pāṇini did not yet know the Rgveda in the form in which the Prātiśākhya describes it. It will be worth our while to see what Pāṇini has to say about the cases of retroflexion just considered.

P. 8.4.27 reads: naś ca dhāūsthorousūśubhyah [chandasi (26), rasābhyaṁ no nah (1)] "In Sacred Literature, n [comes] in the place of n of nas after r or s when part of a root, uru, or su." This sūtra accounts for mo su nah and the other phrases containing su nah. However, this sūtra does not account for āsu śmā nah; nor does any other sūtra in the Aṣṭādhyāyī do so. If the Rgveda had read āsu śmā nah at the time of Pāṇini, the Aṣṭādhyāyī should have accounted for it. If Pāṇini had known the Kramapātha and its peculiar shape in this particular place, he could not possibly have failed to account for it. This agrees with our earlier statement that Pāṇini preceded the Kramapātha.

There is nothing implausible in the assumption that initial n of nah became retroflex n following śmā at a later time than su nah. The cases described in Pāṇini’s rule have none but vowels intervening between the conditioning s or r and nah. The Rgveda Prātiśākhya (5.58; 374), on the other hand, prescribes retroflexion in nah also after

292 Müller’s edition has prthakvair.
293 In fact, the Rgveda Prātiśākhya offers three options: a group of three, four or five words in the Kramapātha. See Appendix VI, below.
294 The reason is that retroflexion of s in the second word is not allowed when the cause of this retroflexion is not present; see Rgveda Prātiśākhya 10.5 (594). mo su nah, e.g., would be mo su / su nah.
295 To be exact: āsu śmā no, due to following maghavan.
purupriyā, brahma, aryamā, and of course śmā. Intervention of a non-vowel without prevention of retroflexion may not have taken place until after Pāṇini.

The use of padaka "one who studies or knows the Pada"\(^{296}\) in the Pāli Buddhist scriptures provides some evidence in support of the view that the Kramapāṭha did not yet exist about Pāṇini’s time. This word is used as an attribute of Brahmins who excel in learning. If the Kramapāṭha had existed when padaka made its appearance in Buddhist literature, a term might have been used that shows the Brahmin's familiarity with the Kramapāṭha,\(^{297}\) such as kramaka; but such terms are unknown to the Buddhist canon. Buddhist literature originated after the Buddha. Whatever the precise dates of the Buddha’s death and of Pāṇini,\(^ {298}\) the two were not far apart. It seems likely that the earliest parts of surviving Buddhist literature may go back to a time contemporaneous with Pāṇini. So far so good.

There is a complication. P. 4.2.61 reads: kramādhibhyo vun "After krama etc. [comes the suffix] vuN (= aka)." This sūtra accounts for the formation of kramaka,\(^ {299}\) The sense to be assigned to kramaka must be "one who studies or knows the Krama", in view of P. 4.2.59 tad adhitē tad veda. At first sight, P. 4.2.61 seems a clear indication that Pāṇini knew the Kramapāṭha of the Ṛgveda. That is to say, once we accept that P. 4.2.61 was part of the original Aṣṭādhyāyī we are almost compelled to believe that Pāṇini knew the Kramapāṭha.

There is however room for doubt. I shall show (i) that there is no evidence against the assumptions that P. 4.2.61 is a later interpolation in the text of the Aṣṭādhyāyī, and (ii) that there is some evidence in support of this assumption.

(i) P. 4.2.61 is not commented upon nor in any other way used in Patañjali’s Mahābhāṣya (Lahiri 1935: 44; Birwé 1966: 205). It can moreover be removed from its context without difficulty. The rule might therefore have been added in the time separating Patañjali from Candra.\(^ {300}\) It is known that much grammatical activity characterized this period, resulting in various additions and modifications in Pāṇini’s grammar (Bronkhorst 1983).

(ii) Some supportive evidence may be seen in the fact that the word krama occurs in the gana accompanying the preceding sūtra P. 4.2.60 kratukthādirāṃtāth thak; this sūtra is thus made to teach the formation of krāmika in the sense "one who studies or knows the Krama". The occurrence of krama in the gana accompanying P. 4.2.60 does not in any way prove that Pāṇini knew the Kramapāṭha. The ganas are known to have undergone modifications and additions. There are even some indications that ganas were not originally part of Pāṇini’s grammar (Scharfe 1977: 102-04). If, then, we assume that someone added krama to the gana accompanying P. 4.2.60, a grammarian who did not approve of the form krāmika and preferred kramaka instead may have added P. 4.2.61 to justify his preferred form. Note here that neither the word krāmika nor kramaka seem to occur in the ancient Sanskrit literature in the sense here required.

\(^{296}\) See below.

\(^{297}\) Similarly today a learned Brahman is called ‘Ghanapāthin’ after the last and most complicated vikrti he masters. (See Abhyankar and Devasthal, 1978: XVII-IL for a discussion of the eleven modes of Vedic recitation: three prakṛti, eight vikṛti.)

\(^{298}\) See § I.1.1, above.

\(^{299}\) It also accounts for padaka. This word does not occur in early Sanskrit literature (it does occur in Pāli and the Buddhist Divyāvadāna, see above) so that it does not affect the argument which follows.

\(^{300}\) The rule occurs in Candra's grammar (3.1.40).
Some further, be it negative, evidence for the late origin of P. 4.2.61 is as follows. P. 4.2.61, together with the accompanying gana, accounts for the words kramaka, padaka, śiksaka, mīmāṃsaka, and sāmaka. All these words are of extremely rare occurrence in ancient literature, and a grammatical derivation is never given. There is one exception. The Jaina Tattvārthādhigama Bhāṣya, which may date from the fourth century CE (Bronkhorst 1985a), paraphrases the word śaikṣaka in Tattvārtha Sūtra 9.24 as śiṣka (II, p. 256). It explains (p. 257):

acirapravrajitaḥ śiṣayitavyah śiṣsah śiṣāṃ arhatīti śaikṣo vā
One who has recently renounced is someone who must be instructed (śiṣayitavya) [and is called] śiṣka because ‘he deserves instruction’ (śiṣāṃ arhati), or [he is called] śaikṣa.

Some passages of the Tattvārthādhigama Bhāṣya show that its author was acquainted with Pāṇini’s grammar.¹⁰¹ There can therefore be no doubt that his remark "he deserves instruction" (śiṣāṃ arhati) is a reference to P. 5.1.63: tad arhati. His word śiṣka is therefore derived, through śiṣa, with the help of P. 5.1.63. (A svārthika suffix -ka or -aka is added after śiṣa/śaikṣa; cf. P. 5.3.70 f.) The alternative derivation with P. 4.2.61 from śiṣāṃ adhitē "who studies the precepts"—the only derivation in the grammar which is explicitly meant to produce śiṣka — would also yield an acceptable meaning,³⁰² yet this derivation is not mentioned. This striking absence may indicate that P. 4.2.61 was not yet part of the Aṣṭādhyāyī at the time when the Tattvārthādhigama Bhāṣya was composed.

It seems safe to conclude that Pāṇini preceded the Kramapātha of the Rgveda. Let us briefly consider a consequence of this conclusion. Aitareya Āranyaka 3.1.3 speaks of nirbhuja, pratṛṇa and ubhayamantara. These terms find their explanation in the statement: "For when he unites the words, that is the Nirbhuja form. When he pronounces the two syllables pure, that is the Pratṛṇa form. This is the first. By the Ubhayamantara both are fulfilled." (cf. Keith 1909: 241, 128; yad dhi samdhiṃ vivartayati tan nirbhujasya rūpam atha yac chudde aksare abhivyāharati tat pratṛṇasyāgra u evobhayamantareṇobhayam vyāptam bhavati.) It seems clear that the three terms refer to the Samhitāpātha, Padapātha and Kramapātha respectively.³⁰³ If now we accept that Pāṇini preceded the Kramapātha of the Rgveda, we must also accept that he preceded the portion of the Aitareya Āranyaka that refers to it. This is hardly surprising, given that the language of the Aitareya Brāhmaṇa is close to Pāṇini.³⁰⁴

It seems clear from the above that the following texts related to the Rgveda were produced (or given their present shape) after Pāṇini: Saṃhitāpātha, Kramapātha,

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¹⁰¹ A full sūtra (P. 5.2.93) is quoted under Tattvārtha Sūtra 2.16 (I, p. 162). A full entry from the Dhātupātha (X.300) is cited under 1.5 (I, p. 44). Oblique references occur repeatedly.

³⁰² The derivation of śaikṣaka from śiṣa with a svārthika suffix, e.g. aN, could not be a problem. Note the meaning assigned to śiṣa in the Tattvārthādhigama Bhāṣya on sūtra 1.3 (I, p. 35): adhitēm adhigama āgamena nimittam śravaṇaṁ śiṣā upadesaṁ ity anarthāntaram.

³⁰³ A closely similar description of the terms is found in the introductory stanzas of the Rgveda Prātiṣākhya, vv. 3 and 4.

³⁰⁴ Bronkhorst 1982: 275 ff.; Greater Magadha § III.1; Cardona 1999: 215-216. Note in this connection that the Grhyasūtras look upon the authors of Brāhmaṇas, such as Aitareya, as Ācāryas, not Rṣi (Deshpande 2001: 38); see further § 1.2.4, above.
Prātiśākhya. It is impossible to say on the basis of the available evidence how far these texts were removed from Pāṇini in time. Recalling that Pāṇini may have lived a short time before Alexander, one cannot be far wrong in assuming that these texts belong to a time after Alexander, and therefore to the period when Brahmanism went through its major transformation. We will see in Part II (§ IIA.4) that during this period the attitude with regard to Sanskrit and the Veda underwent major changes.

I.3. Conclusions

Grave events afflicted the northwestern Brahmins between the time of Alexander and the early centuries of the Common Era, so serious indeed that many left or lost their Brahmanical status. But while some regions, most notably Gandhāra, was virtually lost to Brahmanism, others, such as Kashmir, received Brahmins when circumstances became again favorable. What is more, Brahmanism did not disappear from India during this period. Quite the contrary, it appears that these turbulent centuries induced it to produce the tools that allowed it to initiate its victorious spread over South and Southeast Asia in following centuries.

The data considered in Part I suggest that during this period Brahmanism revised and reinterpreted some of its traditions, furthermore introducing new elements that found expression in forms of literature that had not hitherto existed. Grammar had existed before Alexander, and received a new impetus from Patañjali’s Mahābhāṣya after the collapse of the Maurya empire. Given the political role that Brahmins appear to have played in the regions conquered by Alexander, it is plausible to think that treatises on statecraft may already have existed at that time. Apart from some hints in the Mahābhārata, however, these treatises have not survived. The tradition of Cāṇakya, the minister who helped establish the Maurya empire, may yet be based on a tradition of statecraft that existed in the Northwest.

Our limited evidence allows us to surmise that the literature on domestic ritual and on Dharma, as well as epic literature, may have come into existence rather late, perhaps under the Mauryas or even later. Brahmanism, it appears, made a major effort to present itself in a new light, by introducing a number of new elements. It is time to turn to these new elements and see how they fitted into the overall vision of Brahmanism that was being created.
II. BRAHMANISM
IIA. THE CORE VISION

Brahmanism came out of its turbulent period a conservative ideology. It preserved forever the memory of the good old days when its services were part of the structure of the state. This had changed, and the Brahmans did not like it. We return to this side of Brahmanical ideology below.

There is a further aspect of this movement that we need to be aware of. Brahmanism had gone through a period with little or no political support. It had survived because it had turned inward. We saw in Part I that an extensive literature had begun to be created during or soon after the difficult period. The emphasis in much of this literature, directly or indirectly, is on Brahmans and their way of life, real or imagined. Concern about the rest of society was peripheral, even though it became stronger with the subsequent growth of influence outside the own circles. Brahmanism, as a result, is primarily an ideology that pertains to Brahmans;\(^305\) secondarily it extends beyond Brahmans to other members of society, and indeed to society as a whole. In different words, Brahmanism has both an inward-looking and an outward-looking side, and of these two the inward-looking aspect is primary, both historically and formally. The distinction between these two sides is reflected in surviving Brahmanical literature. Most if not all of this literature has been composed by Brahmans. Many of its texts address themselves, exclusively or almost exclusively, to other Brahmans. They contain the rules by which Brahmans must live, and their intellectual and ritual concerns. Among these texts we must count the manuals for domestic ritual and proper behaviour in general (Grhyasūtras and Dharmasūtras),\(^306\) and all of Vedic auxiliary literature, including the numerous and sometimes voluminous texts that deal with language and its primary expression, the Veda. On the other hand, there are the texts that deal with issues that do not exclusively concern Brahmans but include and may even primarily target others. This becomes increasingly true over time with respect to the more recent literature on Dharma (which has more and more to say about the behaviour of those who are not Brahmans),\(^307\) and applies to texts on statecraft and, of course, the Sanskrit epics (Mahābhārata and Rāmāyaṇa) and Purāṇas. I will argue that the inward-looking aspect of Brahmanism is central, and that its outward-looking aspect is best seen as a spillover. This appears to correspond to the historical situation in which, during the difficult centuries discussed in Part I, Brahmanism was thrown back onto itself, with little external support. Once external circumstances changed and became more favorable, Brahmanism could

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305 Lubin (forthcoming b) puts it as follows: "The suasive force of Smārta Brahminism lay in its public face: the degree to which Brahmans, individually and as a caste, effectively projected an image of themselves as a sacred order whose discipline could be lived out in the householder life — and in the royal household of the court — and not merely in the cloister. Their version of dharma was centered in an idealized vision of society, rather than in an otherworldly transcendence."

306 With regard to the Dharmasūtras, Olivelle (2000: 11) observes: "The principal audience of these texts was undoubtedly Brahmin males, who were also the principal creators and consumers of all the literature produced in the Vedic branches. The Brahmin is the implied subject of most rules in the Dharmasūtras."

307 Cf. Lingat 1967: 231: "La théorie de la fonction royale, absente dans les dharmasūtra qui n'en mentionnent que quelques éléments, prend une place importante dans les dharmaśāstra ...". About these more recent Dharmaśāstras, Winternitz (1920: 486) observes: "Diese metrischen Dharmaśāstras ... beschäftigen ... sich weit mehr mit den Rechten und Pflichten des Königs ..."
increasingly emphasize its outward-looking aspect, based on its meanwhile solidly established inward-looking core vision.

Part IIA will concentrate on this inward-looking and self-centered core vision. This core vision has one overriding concern: to separate Brahmins from everyone else. Brahmins are completely different from others, but not only that. To the extent possible they keep themselves aloof from others, by living on their own and avoiding contact. Ironically, it appears that in due time this emphasis on looking inward allowed Brahmanism to start exerting influence on others.

Brahmanism was not only inward-looking but also extremely conservative. Brahmins did not like the new political structures they encountered, nor the new phenomena that accompanied these. The Maurya Empire had been centred in Magadha, right in the middle of the region where South Asia’s second urbanisation was taking place. The Maurya capital, Pātaliputra, was a large city, according to some the world’s largest city at its time. Brahmins detested towns and cities. They said so explicitly when obliged to talk about them. More often, they adopted a different strategy: they ignored their existence. Where possible, they depicted themselves in a world that was no longer there. In this respect (and to avoid misunderstanding, let me add: only in this respect), their behaviour was not dissimilar to that of another group that was obsessed with the past: the National-Socialists of the Third Reich. In the House of German Art in Munich, opened by Hitler in 1937, there were hundreds of paintings; not one depicted urban and industrial life.

Brahmanical literature of the period concerned presents an image of an ideal world that no longer existed and may never, in fact, have existed. The presentation of this imaginary world was not only meant to preserve the memory of an idealized past; its other, equally important, purpose was to shape the future in accordance with Brahmanical wishes. It is in this period of transition that a new notion appears in Brahmanical literature, that of the Brahmanical hermitage (āśrama). Wise Brahmins are depicted as living in these simple yet idyllic places, dedicating themselves to their Vedic ritual duties, reciting mantras in the process. These hermitages appear in the literature at the same time that also gifts of land to Brahmins — the so-called agrahāras — begin to appear in literature and in the epigraphic record. The two institutions are clearly connected: The literary āśramas functioned as examples and encouragement for rulers and others close to the centres of political power to provide Brahmins with agrahāras, an encouragement that became extraordinarily successful in subsequent centuries. Of course, Brahmanical literature never suggests that āśramas were an innovation. On the contrary, the literature presents us with the idea that āśramas had always been there. This illustrates — and it is but one illustration among many — that Brahmanism, even where it innovates, never admits that it does so. Brahmanism projects the image of preserving the past. Historical scholarship shows that it does not always do so.

This, I repeat, is the idealized picture that much of Brahmanical literature projects. It follows that this literature is a rather poor source of information for those who wish to

309 Greater Magadha p. 251 f.
311 Buddhism in the Shadow of Brahmanism § 2.4
study ancient India’s city life, or the languages spoken, or indeed the use of writing. If we can derive information about these matters from Brahmanical literature at all, then it is in spite of the efforts made by its authors to hide them.

Early Brahmanical literature, then, is not the most reliable source of information with regard to such matters, and the conclusion that there were no cities when one text was composed, or no writing at the time of composition of another, simply because neither cities nor writing are mentioned in those texts, is based on very shaky foundations indeed. It would be comparable to the conclusion, based on the absence of depictions of urban and industrial life in the House of German Art in Munich in 1937, that there were no cities or industrial life in Germany, one of the most urbanized and industrialized countries at that time. Let me emphasize once again that this absence is, in both cases, based on ideology, not necessarily on historical fact.

It is in the light of these considerations that we must study early Brahmanical literature. We know, for example, that Pāṇini was acquainted with the existence of writing (he mentions it). We also know that not long after him Aśoka left numerous inscriptions all over the Indian subcontinent. If we add to this the Brahmanical disinclination to refer to writing, all conclusions about the oral nature of extensive Brahmanical texts from the succeeding period (such as the Mahābhāṣya and the Mahābhārata, both longer than the Rgveda) must be considered shaky and are probably based on preconceived ideas about the supposedly miraculous mnemonic skills of the Indians of yore (for which no parallels can be cited from the Indian present or from other cultures).

Moreover, it means falling in the trap laid by the Brahmanical tradition itself. Doris Meth Srinivasan (1997: 314), in a chapter that emphasizes the strong Brahmanical presence in Mathurā during the Kuśāṇa, draws attention to "the great imbalance between the number of Buddhist and Jain inscriptions and those having some kind of Brahmanic or Hindu content". Indeed, "[o]ut of the total Kuśāṇa inscriptions from Mathurā which number about 240 ..., three, possibly four, have some kind of Brahmanic or Hindu content. In fact, out of the slightly less than 300 total number of Mathurā inscriptions falling between the Mauryan and Kuśāṇa ages, only nine (or ten) record some Brahmanic or Hindu content." Srinivasan then rightly observes: "The point is that this imbalance is not because Brahmanism and Hinduism had nothing to transmit. It is the long arm of the Vedic tradition with its preference, indeed insistence, on the oral transmission of sacred knowledge (śruti), that could well be instrumental in the rather remarkable imbalance. ... The lesson to be learned ... is that oral transmission has higher cultural prestige than written communication, and that lesson could well be a reason why Brahmanic and Hindu images so seldom carry inscriptions." Indeed, no historically responsible understanding of Brahmanism is possible without taking into consideration its extreme conservatism, which may often mislead us.

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312 Houben (2009: 82 n. 9) states: "Falk (1993: 255) cite un texte qui montre de façon incontestable que le prêtre n’emploie aucun texte écrit comme ‘secours’: selon B[audhāyana] Dh[arma] S[ūtra] 3.9.8-9, quelqu’un qui a oublié un passage de la Samhitā (et le mot apratībhāyāṃ veut vraiment dire que le passage ne vient pas à l’esprit) doit réciter un [autre] texte sacré …” This passage reveals nothing about the use of writing at the time of its composition; it is, on the other hand, in perfect agreement with our observation that authors made an effort not to refer to writing.

313 For a concise history of the Oral-Formulaic Theory, a theory that cannot be applied to Vedic memorization, see Foley 1988. See further § IIA.3.2, below.
The following chapters will take up in further detail some of these features of Brahmanism.\textsuperscript{314} The fundamental conservatism of this movement will be evident. This conservatism did not only oppose all change, but went to the extent of denying that the past had been different from the present in any essential manner. In this way, Brahmans presented themselves not only as preservers of the past but also as guardians of an eternal present. They were the only ones entitled to appropriate this role, a fact they did not forget to emphasize on every opportunity.

IIA.1. Purity of descent

IIA.1.1. The rules

One is born a Brahmin; one cannot become a Brahmin in any other way than through birth.\textsuperscript{315} This is a fundamental rule of Brahmanism, at least in theory.\textsuperscript{316} The \textit{Anuśāsanaparvan} of the \textit{Mahābhārata} discusses the issue. This is how Brockington (1998: 209; slightly adjusted) sums up this discussion:

Yudhiṣṭhira asks whether a \textit{ksatriya}, \textit{vaiśya} or \textit{sūdra} can gain the status of the Brahmin (13.28.2-3) and Bhīṣma’s reply is to narrate the story of Mataṅga (13.28.4 – 30.16). Mataṅga was brought up as a Brahmin but one day his true status as a \textit{candāla}, because of his mother’s adultery with one, is betrayed by his conduct; he spends the rest of his life in austerities in a vain attempt to gain Brahminhood and finally settle for the power to move at will in the sky.

The \textit{Suttanipāta} of the Pali Buddhist canon puts the following words in the mouth of a Brahmin called Bhāradvāja who is asked how one becomes a Brahmin: \textsuperscript{317} “When one is well-born on both the mother’s and the father’s side, and is of pure descent for seven generations, uncriticised and irreproachable with reference to birth, to such an extent one becomes a Brahmin.”\textsuperscript{318} And the self-proclaimed and proud Brahmin Ambaṭṭha is

\textsuperscript{314} The following enumeration of features is by no means exhaustive. Some are only exterior, including the different ways in which Brahmans keep their hair, or the sacrificial thread. The latter, incidentally, appears to have been introduced at a date near the beginning of the Common Era; so Olivelle 2012. See also § I.1.3, above.

\textsuperscript{315} Occasionally texts add that one can become a Brahmin through rebirth; cp. ĀpDhS 2.11.10: “By following the righteous path people belonging to a lower caste-class (\textit{varṇa}) advance in their subsequent birth to the next higher caste-class” (Olivelle 2000: 89, modified). However, as indicated in Appendix III, not all texts are open to this. Early Buddhist texts, on the other hand, emphasize karmic rather than physical descent, and call someone a Brahmin on the basis of his karmic genealogy; see Appleton 2011. It is, incidentally, a lot easier to lose the Brahmanical status than to gain it. Many Brahmanical texts, and some Buddhist ones, specify the circumstances that lead to such loss; see Eltschinger 2000: 55-60 (= 2012a: 49-55).

\textsuperscript{316} This was not yet the case in Vedic times; see Rau 1957: 62 ff., Basu 1969: 29 ff.


\textsuperscript{318} The idea that seven generations are required to guarantee the purity a person’s descent recalls GautDhS 4.22: “By successively marrying persons of the higher or the lower caste-class (\textit{utkaraṣa-apakaraṣa}), in the seventh generation the offspring moves to the one or the other caste-class” (tr. Olivelle, modified). Kane (HistDh II/I p. 62 ff.) discusses the phenomenon of \textit{jātyutkaraṣa}, also in other texts; seven generations often play a role here.
humbled when the Buddha reveals to him that he is not well-born, being the descendent of a slave girl. Birth is not the only factor that plays a role in the appreciation of a Brahmin: asceticism and learning add to his glory, but they do not replace the requirement of birth.

What, then, are the requirements for being well-born? In order to be born a Brahmin, one’s father has to be a Brahmin. Many texts agree that one’s mother has to be a Brahmin too. This is what P. V. Kane, the author of the voluminous History of Dharmaśāstra, says about it: “There is a … proposition advanced by many writers that a man belongs to a particular varṇa or jāti by birth only i.e. if born in lawful wedlock of parents both of whom belong to that varṇa or jāti. This is the view held by all medieval writers and digests and it is expressly said that a man belongs to a caste by birth and no actions of his can alter that fact, that several castes are like the species of animals and that caste attaches to the body and not to the soul …” However, there are exceptions. According to a number of relatively early Brahmanical texts, the child of a Brahmin father and a Kṣatriya mother, too, is a Brahmin.

Consider the Baudhāyana Dharmaśātra. Having asserted that a Brahmin can have wives of all four caste-classes, a Kṣatriya three (all except Brahmins), and so on, it states:

Sons born from wives of the same caste-class [as the husband’s] or the caste-class immediately below his are of the same caste-class [as the husband’s].
Sons born from wives two or three caste-classes below the husband are Ambaṣṭhas, Ugras, and Niśādas.

And again:

[A child born] from a Brahmin father in a Kṣatriya [mother] is a Brahmin.

The Gautama Dharmaśātra takes the same position:

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319 DN I p. 87 ff. The outcome of this debate must have been predictable for any informed listener, for Ambaṣtha is a frequently used term in Brahmanical literature to designate a descendant of a Brahmin father and a mother from a lower caste-class; see Greater Magadha p. 354 ff.
320 So the grammarian Patañjali (second half of second century BCE); Mahā-bh I p. 411 l. 16-17 (on P. 2.2.6): tapah śrutam ca yoniṣ cety etad brāhmaṇaṁ kārakam/ tapahśrutābhyaṁ yo hi no jāti brāhmaṁ eva saṁ/ “Asceticism, learning and descent make a Brahmin; without asceticism and learning he is nothing but a Brahmin by birth.”
322 The most important exception is Āpastamba, whose Dharmaśātra forbids all mixed marriages; see Jha 1970: 273.
323 BaudhDhS 1.16.6: tāsu putṛaṁ savarṇānantarāsu savarṇāḥ/ ekāntaradvyantarāmsaṁbhoganiśādāḥ/. Tr. Olivelle, modified.
324 BaudhDhS 1.17.3: brāhmaṇāt kṣatriyaṁ brāhmaṇ[ah] … Brinkhaus (1978: 138, 169) draws attention to similar passages attributed to Uṣanas and Devala.
325 GautDhS 4.16: anulomā anantaraikāntaradvyantarāsa jātiḥ savarṇāṁbaṁbhoganiśādādausyantrapāraśavāḥ. I have modified Olivelle’s translation in the light of the parallel passage in the Baudhāyana Dharmaśātra discussed above. Brinkhaus (1978: 99 f.) believes that the Dausyantas and Pārāśavas have been added later to the text.
Children born in keeping with the natural order of caste-classes from women of the caste-class immediately below the man’s are of the same caste-class [as the father]; from women two and three caste-classes below the man’s, Ambaṣṭhas, Ugras, Niṣādas, Daṇḍyantas and Pāraśavas.

So does the Arthaśāstra: 326

The sons of a Brahmin and a Kṣatriya born of a wife belonging to the immediately next varṇa are of the same varṇa [as the father].

The same idea finds expression in the Anuśāsanaparvan of the Mahābhārata: 327

A Brahmin [can] have four wives, [viz. a Brahmin, a Kṣatriyā, a Vaiśyā, and a Śūdrā]; in two of these [viz. the Brahmin and the Kṣatriyā] his self is [re-]born, in the two following ones [i.e. the Vaiśyā and the Śūdrā] lower children are produced, of the same caste as their mother.

The Mānava Dharmaśāstra expresses the idea in the following verse: 328

As from two of the three caste-classes is born a child that is one’s own self — being born from a woman of his own caste-class because of the contiguity — so the same process applies to excluded men.

Elsewhere, however, the Mānava Dharmaśāstra remains lukewarm with regard to the idea of Brahmins born from a Kṣatriya mother, as is clear from the following: 329

Sons fathered by twice-born men on wives of the caste-class immediately below theirs are considered only ‘similar’, disdained as they are due to their mother’s defect.

Even stronger is this verse: 330


328 Manu 10.28: yathā trayāṇāṁ varṇāṇāṁ dvayor ātmāsyā jāyate/ ānantaryāt svayonyāṁ tu tathā bāhyēvas api kramah//. Tr. Olivelle 2005: 209, modified. On p. 335-36 Olivelle adds the following explanatory note: “The meaning appears to be this. From a woman of two of the three upper classes (that is, from a Brahmin and a Kṣatriya woman), a Brahmin begets a son that is his own self. The phrase ānantaryāt svayonyām is elliptical containing an argument supporting the above claim. The meaning is that even a Kṣatriya woman can be counted as ‘a woman of his own class’ because of her contiguity.”

329 Manu 10.6: strīṣya anantarajātāsu dvijāir utpāditān sutāṁ/ sadṛśāṁ eva tāṁ āhur mātrāśavigarhitān/-. Tr. Olivelle, modified.

330 Manu 10.10: viprasya trīṣu varṇeṣu nṛpater varṇayar dvayoh/ vaiśyasya varṇe caikasmin śad ete ‘pasadam śmarāḥ/-. Tr. Olivelle, modified.
A Brahmin’s children by the three lower caste-classes, a Kṣatriya’s by the two lower caste-classes, and a Vaiśya’s by the one lower caste-class — tradition calls these six ‘low-born’.

It is clear from these passages that, beside the position that both the father and the mother of a Brahmin have to be Brahmins, another position is fairly strongly represented in the literature, viz., that also the offspring of a Brahmin father and a Kṣatriya mother is a Brahmin.

Before we turn to discussing this, let us briefly consider some verses that take a more indulgent position. Some verses from the Anuśāsanaparvan of the Mahābhārata, to begin with, state that also the offspring of a Brahmin father and a Vaiśya mother is a Brahmin:

A Brahmin [can] have three wives, [viz. a Brahmin, a Kṣatriyā, and a Vaiśyā], a Kṣatriya [can] have two wives, a Vaiśya should seek [a wife] of his own caste-class; the offspring in these wires will be the same [in rank as the father].

And again:

He who is born from a Brahmin [father] in [a mother who belongs to] the three [superior] caste-classes is a Brahmin.

And once more:

Someone born from a Brahmin [father] in a Brahmin [mother] is a Brahmin, there is no doubt about this. The same applies to someone born [from a Brahmin father] in a Kṣatriyā [mother], or in a Vaiśyā [mother].

Two verses from the Mānava Dharmaśāstra go even further, introducing the possibility for a Śūdra to become a Brahmin:

If an offspring of a Brahmin man from a Śūdra woman were to bear children from a superior partner, within seven generations the inferior attains the superior caste; a Śūdra thus attains the rank of a Brahmin, and so does a Brahmin the rank of a Śūdra.

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331 Mhbh 13.44.10: tiśro bhāryā brāhmaṇasyasya dve bhārye kṣatriyasya tu/ vaisyāḥ svajātīṁ vindeta tāsy apatyaṁ samam bhavet/.
332 Mhbh 13.47.17cd: triṣu varṇeṣu jāto hi brāhmaṇād brāhmaṇo bhavet. This “comes amid discussion of the different amounts to be inherited by sons of a Brahmin born from wives of the four classes. Sons born from wives of the three twice-born classes inherit amounts that decline according to the wife’s rank, even though all three types of sons would have the Brahmin’s status” (Hiltebeitel 2011: 215).
333 Mhbh 13.47.28: brāhmaṇyāṁ brāhmaṇāj jāto brāhmaṇāḥ syān na saṁśayaḥ/ kṣatriyāyāṁ tathaiva svād vaisyāyāṁ api caiva hi/.
334 Manu 10.64-65ab: śudrāyāṁ brāhmaṇāj jātāḥ śreyasā cet praṣyayate/ aśreyāṁ chreyāsīṁ jātiṁ gacchaty ā saptamād yugāḥ/ śūdro brāhmaṇaṁ eti brāhmaṇaṁ caiti śūdraṁ/ Tr. Olivelle.
Kosambi (1975: 319) suggests that these verses reflect a situation in which Brahmins immigrated into territories without their womenfolk, which resulted in intermarriage with local inhabitants. Kane (HistDh II/I p. 65) points out that rules like the one here expressed, including the counting of generations, would have been impossible to enforce in actual life. This is no doubt true, but is a criticism that could be directed to many of the rules of descent we have considered. These verses do however show that there were exceptions to the strict rules governing the Brahmanical status of children whose mother was not a Brahmin.

The *Yājñavalkyasūtra* (1.96) presumably refers to the same as Manu, but adds a new and interesting dimension: a person can after a number of generations rise to a higher caste as a result of his *livelihood*.335

It should be understood that there is rise in caste in the seventh or even in the fifth generation; if there is inversion as to the avocations, then there is corresponding similarity (of *varṇa* in the seventh or even fifth generation).

We will return to the effect of one’s avocation on one’s status below. Here we continue our analysis of the passages that deal with descent and ancestry. We may sum up what we have found so far by stating that, for some time, the belief that a Brahmin father and a Kṣatriyā mother produce Brahmanical offspring was relatively wide-spread. The idea that the offspring of a Brahmanical father and a Vaśyā mother is a Brahmin is, to the best of my knowledge, exceptional, and the notion that a Śūdra mother may, in certain circumstances, become the ancestor of the Brahmin descendant is grudgingly accepted by some authors of work on Dharma.

In studying passages about the rankings of mixed offspring, it is important to keep in mind that most of what they say is largely without connection with lived reality. However, one important exception must be made. We do not know who cared about the speculative schemes about mixed castes invented by Brahmins. Perhaps nobody cared, with the notable exception of the Brahmins themselves. And their main concern was to secure the purity of their own caste-class. So if Brahmanical texts say that a Brahmin father and a Kṣatriya mother produce Brahmanical offspring, this implies that at least certain Brahmins were willing to accept such offspring in their midst.

It is not difficult to see why certain Brahmins would be willing to accept this particular kind of mixed offspring. Brahmins — or at least some of them — aspired to positions at or around the royal court, and Brahmanical literature emphasizes the respected positions they claimed for themselves. Marriages between highly placed Brahmins and princesses may therefore have occurred, and we know that such marriages were common in Southeast Asia.336 We may assume that such marriages, or the

335 *Yājñavalkyasūtra* 1.96: *jātyutkarṣo yuge jīvayah saṃtame pañcamē 'pi vā/ vyatyaye karmanām sāmyām pūrvavac cādhratottaram//* Tr. Kane, HistDh II/I p. 64.

336 Cf. Quaritch Wales 1931: 59: “One very remarkable sign of the power of the Brahmans during the Aṅkor period is that, contrary to the modern custom, by which princesses of the royal blood rarely marry, formerly alliances were common with the Brahmans; and up to the present day there is a tradition amongst the Bakus, who are the descendants of the ancient Brahmins, that in the event of the royal family failing, a successor would be chosen from amongst them.” Coedès 1964: 219: “Jayavarman V [Cambodia, 10th century] maria sa soeur Indralakshmi au brahmane hindou Divakarabhattra, né dans l’Inde sur les bords de la Yamunā, auteur de diverses fondations civâïtes”; p. 223: “Les familles brahmaniques s’alliaient souvent avec la famille royale: les
possibility that they might occur, are behind the rules that acknowledge the children of such couples as fully Brahmanical. This assumption also supports the view that such marriages were as a whole rare, and out of reach for the majority of Brahmins. However, they may at times have played a role in the spread of Brahmanical ideology.

The rule allowing a Brahmin man to marry a woman from a varṇa one degree lower (i.e., a Kṣatriyā) and to have children that are still Brahmanical has been dropped long since, as we have seen. Something similar survives among subgroups whose members are all Brahmins. Consider the following:

The Brahmans [in the North of India] are generally roughly divided into (1) those who do not have to earn their living by officiating at domestic ritual and (2) those who do it for a living. The former generally own land and engage in literary studies. The latter are family priests, or priests officiating at holy places. The priests who officiate at holy places when people take their baths in the holy rivers or offer worship, are held to be rather lower in status than the family priests. Among the priests at holy places ... those who officiate at funerary rites hold again a position lower than those who officiate at auspicious ceremonies. In Banaras, Mathura, Ayodhya, Gaya, Nasik, Rameshwar and all over India in the sacred places there are these Brahmans who are generally well off but are held to belong to a very low status among Brahmans. The Brahmans of each of these divisions marry only among themselves, but may sometimes receive a bride from a slightly lower division but not from a division many steps lower than their own. Thus a Brahmin of the first class i.e. belonging to a learned family will never marry the daughter of a Mahābhrāhmaṇa who officiates at funerary rites. [According to custom] a man marries a girl belonging to the same division or to one which is only of a slightly lower status ...

The general rule is as follows (Trautmann 1993: 88-89): “Marriage by gift begins by presuming the superiority of the groom’s people vis-à-vis the bride’s people. ... kanyādāna [the giving of a daughter in marriage, JB] ends by perpetuating the asymmetry between two parties to the transaction, for after marriage hospitality, gifts and deference must flow always and only from the bride’s people to the groom’s people. ... Givers must not be takers in the transcendental commerce; and, we may add, takers being by

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337 Note that rulers frequently took Brahmin wives, especially if they belonged to indigenous dynasties during the period ‘between the empires’: “The Śūrgas start to mention the gotra of their mothers, as if a ruler without a Brahmin mother were substandard. Inside India, the Sātavāhanas and many other dynasties take over the idea and stress their pure descent this way. A Brahmin first queen started to become indispensable even for non-Brahmin kings.” (Falk 2006a: 152). In Kālidāsa’s play, on the other hand, Śākuntalā, who lives in a Brahmanical hermitage, is only a suitable wife for King Duṣyanta because she turns out to be a daughter of the Kṣatriya sage Viśvāmitra; this, at any rate, is Kumārila’s understanding of the passage. See Davis 2007: 288-289.

definition the superiors of givers, the kanyādāna complex carries with it a tendency to hypergamy.”

There are, finally, also Brahmanical communities that do not intermarry. An important example is the regional divide between Gauḍa and Drāvīḍa Brahmins. Between these two there is a general prohibition on ritual and marital cross-over. But even among the Drāvīḍa groups, “generally there is no intermarriage among the Brahmins from Tamilnadu, Andhra, Karnataka, and Maharashtra due to differences of region and language, in spite of the fact that the Dharmaśāstra allows such marriages” (Deshpande 2012: 358).

IIA.1.2. Brahmins of foreign origin: the Magas

The exigency of pure descent confronted Brahmanism with a challenge in the form of certain immigrants who ended up being recognized as Brahmins. The most striking case is that of the Magas who appear to have immigrated into India from Persia. This, at any rate, is the historical reconstruction that modern scholarship provides. Seen from the Brahmanical point of view, the situation was altogether different. This will be shown in the present chapter.

According to certain Purāṇas, the Magas are Brahmins who came from another continent, the continent called Śākadvīpa, and settled in India. A number of terminological similarities with Persian words have convinced modern scholars that these Magas were originally Magi from Persia, or from a region in which Persian culture had been established; they had moved into India and succeeded in being recognized as Brahmins.

As a general rule, Brahmanical texts are critical about foreigners. The fact — if it is one — that certain foreigners succeeded in attaining Brahmanical status without hiding their foreign origins is therefore remarkable and invites suspicion. Let us therefore look more closely into the matter.

Presumably the earliest surviving text providing us with information about the arrival of the Magas is the Sāmba Purāṇa. It links the arrival of these Brahmins to the introduction of images in sun-worship. It is the first sun-image that is presented as speaking the following words:

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339 The Magas may not be the only Brahmins of foreign origin. The Chitpavan Brahmins of Maharashtra are sometimes believed to be in origin foreigners who were turned into Brahmins. See Patterson 1968; Lele 2010.

340 For a brief overview of the history of this research, see Rocher 1986: 217 ff., with notes; cp. Stietencron 1966: 13 f., Humbach 1978. Francis Wilford (1809) was perhaps the first to state that these Brahmins had entered India from the Northwest; see Leask 2000, esp. p. 214. Thapar (1971: 434 f.) speaks of ‘the gradual evolution in status’ of the Maga Brahmins, who were “at first looked down upon and not admitted to all the śrāddha ceremonies”; however, “gradually their position improved”. It is not clear on what evidence this is based.

341 They were presumably first active in the sun-temple in Multan, in Sindh; see Maclean 1989: 18-20. Jettmar (1997) finds evidence in the form of petroglyphs for a solar cult in the upper Indus valley, which he associates with the sun worship in Multan.

342 na yogyah paricaryāyām jambūdvīpe mamānagha/ mama pūjākarān gatvā śākadvipād ihānaya// 27 // lavaṇodāt pare pāre kṣīrodena samāvṛtaḥ/ jambūdvīpāt paras tasmāc chākadvīpa iti śrutah// 28 // tatra puyā janapadaś cāturvarṇyasamāśritāḥ/ magaś ca maśakāś caiva mānasā maṃdagaś
There is no one in Jambūdvīpa who is suitable to serve me. Go and bring worshippers for me from Śākadvīpa. It lies at the other shore of the salt-ocean and is surrounded by the milk-ocean. It lies beyond Jambūdvīpa and is therefore known as Śākadvīpa. In that [continent] there are the following populations, holding on to the hierarchy of the four caste-classes (varṇa): the Magas, the Maśakas, the Mānasas and the Mandagas. The Magas are primarily Brahmins, the Maśakas are said to be Kṣatriyas, the Mānasas are to be thought of as Vaśyas, the Mandagas among them are Śūdras. Among them there is no commingling of caste-classes or episodes of life (āśrama) whatsoever. The inhabitants, because they do not deviate from Dharma, are completely happy.

Details of the manner in which a number of Maga Brahmins travelled from Śākadvīpa to Jambūdvīpa concern us to the extent that they needed divine help: these Magas travelled on the back of the divine bird Garuḍa. It is equally interesting to note that these Magas were already Brahmins in their original continent, and that this was a recognized fact, also in India.

As stated earlier, most modern scholars believe that the myth of the Magas who came from Śākadvīpa corresponds to a historical reality in which Magi came from Persia or from a region strongly influenced by Persian religion. To quote Stietencron (1966: 13):

Was an dieser Legende so bedeutsam schien, war der Name der Sonnenpriester, welcher sogleich an die medischen Magier, die Magoi Herodots erinnerte, sowie vor allem drei weitere Worte iranischen Ursprungs, die mit dem Bericht über diese Priester verbunden sind. Das erste, avyaṇga, bezeichnet den Gürtel der Sonnenpriester und kann mit av. aiwyāghana gleichgesetzt werden. Das zweite, paṭidāna, entspricht av. paiti.dāna, dem Mundtuch der Zarathustrier und das dritte, varśman, ist av. barśman, das kultische Zweigbündel.

It is not our aim to discuss the different views that have been presented as to the time and region of origin of the migrating Magi; according to certain scholars there may have been

\[343\text{This can hardly be an etymological explanation of the name Śākadvīpa, and is rather an attempt to emphasize that Śākadvīpa is a different continent (dvīpa) from Jambūdvīpa.}\]

\[344\text{Not all! Éric Pirart writes to me (7.10.2011): “Le fait que les quatre castes du Śākadvīpa portent toutes un nom commençant par ma- attire mon attention et me fait douter de l’origine magu- de maga-: le hasard aurait-il trop bien fait les choses? En effet, ne faudrait-il pas reconnaître dans ma+ le préfixe iranien ancien hma+ (= védique smat+) et donner par exemple au nom de mašaka- que reçoivent les kṣatriya du Śākadvīpa le sens de ‘dotés de force’ (*hma+saka-*smat+šaka-)? Autrement dit: une origine iranienne, oui; une étymologie de maga- par l’iranien magu- non.”}\]

\[345\text{See also Scheftelowitz 1933.}\]
several migrations, at more than one time and from more than one region of origin.\footnote{346} Other sources beside the Sāmba Purāṇa confirm that there were (and are) in India Brahmins who claimed to have come from Śākadvipa and who were known by the names Magas, sometimes Bhojaks, or just Śākadvipiya Brahmins.

In what follows, I take it for established that there were at some time, and presumably still are, in India Brahmins of foreign origin, whose ancestors had migrated to India from a region in which Persian religious notions prevailed. I also assume that the story in the Sāmba Purāṇa — and in the Bhaviṣya Purāṇa, which borrowed this passage from the Sāmba Purāṇa\footnote{347} — refers back to this event (or these events), though in a heavily reworked manner. Our question is now: Why should immigrants from the Northwest be accepted as Brahmins?

Recall at this point that Brahmanical literature, and Indian literature in general, doesn’t have the slightest tendency to believe that the Brahmanical order of society prevailed outside India, least of all in the regions to the Northwest.\footnote{348} Al-Biruni, a visitor from Persia, and therefore from a region to which the Magas may conceivably have once belonged, said in around 1030 CE the following about the Indians:\footnote{349} all their fanaticism is directed against those who do not belong to them — against all foreigners. They call them mleccha, i.e. impure, and forbid having any connection with them, be it by intermarriage or any other kind of relationship, or by sitting, eating, and drinking with them, because thereby, they think, they would be polluted. They consider as impure anything which touches the fire and the water of a foreigner; and no household can exist without these two elements. Besides, they never desire that a thing which once has been polluted should be purified and thus recovered, as, under ordinary circumstances, if anybody or anything has become unclean, he or it would strive to regain the state of purity. They are not allowed to receive anybody who does not belong to them, even if he wished it, or was inclined to their religion.

Mlecchas are often referred to in the most disagreeable terms.\footnote{350} The Mahābhārata, for example, states:\footnote{351} “The Mlecchas are the dirt of mankind.” For good measure the same

\footnote{346} See Stietencron 1966: 235 ff.; Humbach 1969; Srivastava 1988; Panaino 1996. Some reject foreign influence and claim an Indian origin for the sun worship of the Magas; so e.g. Pandey 1971: 177 ff. Chattopadhyaya (1970: 173 ff.) discusses the possibility that there was already a sun temple in India at the time of Alexander.

\footnote{347} See Hazra 1952. A list of all the verses and chapters of the Sāmba Purāṇa that also occur in the Bhaviṣya Purāṇa can be found in Hazra 1958: 57-59. For a comparative study of the relevant portions of the two texts, see Stietencron 1966: 29 ff. Also the Brahma Purāṇa refers to these events; Srivastava 1972: 241 n. 265.


\footnote{349} Sachau 1888: I: 19-20. A. Sharma (1983: 118 f.) tries to demonstrate that this statement is exaggerated.

\footnote{350} See in general Parasher 1991. According to the Vaiṣṇava Dharmaśāstra (84.4), in the lands of the Mlecchas the four varṇas do not exist (cāturvarṇasyavavasthānam yasmin deśe na vidyate/tam mlecchadeśaṁ jānīyad āryāvartam atah param/). Occasionally Sanskrit literature contains also less negative, even positive, remarks about Mlecchas, as in Śābara’s Mīmāṃsābhāṣya on [MīmSū] 1.3.10: “Mlecchas are more skilled [than Brahmins] in rearing and catching birds.”

\footnote{351} Mhbb 8.30.70: mānuṣānāṁ malaṁ mlecchāḥ[.]}
passage adds that the Bāhlīkas, i.e. the inhabitants of Bactria, are the dirt of the earth.\footnote{Mhbh 8.30.68: \textit{malaṃ prthivyā bāhlīkāḥ}.} Elsewhere the \textit{Mahābhārata} explains that Mlecchas are lower even than the Śūdras, in a passage summed up by Brockington (1998: 208) as follows:

originally Brahmā created just Brahmins but those who were short-tempered and violent left their \textit{varna}, turned red and became \textit{kṣatriyas}, those who took to cattle-rearing and agriculture turned yellow and became \textit{vaiśyas}, and those who in their delusion took to injury and untruth turned black and became \textit{śūdras} …; those who diverged still further from the proper norms and did not recognise them became Piśācas, Rākṣasas, Pretas and various sorts of Mlecchas.\footnote{Mhbh 12.181.10-18. This passage is remarkable in that it attributes the existence of the caste-classes (\textit{varna}) to the effects of karma; it begins with the observation that there is, at bottom, no difference between the caste-classes (\textit{na viśeṣo 'sti varṇaṁ sarvam brāhmaṇam idam jagat/ brahmaṇaḥ pūrvasṛṣṭaṁ hi karmabhīr varṇatām gatam/}). For a different position, see Appendix III.}

Other passages specify which foreigners are meant. In the \textit{Anuśāsanaparvan} of the \textit{Mahābhārata}, for example, we find the following:\footnote{Mhbh 13.33.19-21: \textit{śākā yavanakāmbojās tās tāḥ kṣatriyajātyah/ vrṣatavat pariṣṭaḥ brāhmaṇānām adarsanāt// dramīlaś ca kalinīgaś ca pulindāś căpy uśīnarāḥ/ kaulāḥ sarpā māhiśakās tās tāḥ kṣatriyajātyah/ vrṣatavat pariṣṭaḥ brāhmaṇānām adarsanāt/. Similary Mhbh 13.35.17-18: mekalā dramīdāḥ kāśāḥ paundrāḥ kollagirās tathā/ saṃdikā daradā darvāś caurāḥ śabarabarbārāḥ/ kirāṭā yavanāś caiva tās tāḥ kṣatriyajātyah/ vrṣatavat anuprāptā brāhmaṇānām adarsanāt/.}  

Those various men of Kṣatriya birth — Śakas, Yavanas, and Kāmbojas — have reached the level of Śūdras because no Brahmins are seen among them. Those various men of Kṣatriya birth — Dramiṇas, Kaliṅgas, Pulindas, Uśīnaras, Kaulas, Śarpas, and Māhiśakas — have reached the level of Śūdras because no Brahmins are seen among them.

A similar passage occurs in the \textit{Mānava Dharmaśāstra}:\footnote{Manu 10.43-44: \textit{saṇakās tu kriyālopaḍ imāḥ kṣatriyajātyah/ vrṣatavat gata loke brāhmaṇādarsanātena ca/ puṇḍrakāś coḍadravidāḥ kāmbojā yavanāḥ śakāḥ/ pāradāḥ paḥvalāś cināḥ kirāṭā daradās tathā/}; tr. Olivelle, modified.

By neglecting rites and because no Brahmins are seen among them, these men of Kṣatriya birth have gradually reached in the world the level of Śūdras — Puṇḍrakas, Coḍas, Draviṇas, Kāmbojas, Yavanas, Śakas, Pāradas, Pahlavas, Činas, Kirātas, and Daradas.

Several of the populations enumerated in these two passages can be identified, and some of these were situated in the northwest or further to the west: the Śakas, Yavanas (= Greeks) and Kāmbojas lived in the northwestern parts of the Indian subcontinent during the centuries around the beginning of the Common Era. The Pahlavas and Pāradas were Persians. According to these passages, there were no Brahmins among them.
We have already seen (in § I.1.3) that the Assalāyana Sutta of the Majjhima Nikāya (MN II p. 149) makes a similar observation, stating that the four caste-classes (varna) do not exist among the Yonas (= Yavanas, Greeks) and the Kāmbojas. Aśoka’s thirteenth Rock Edict claims that there are no Brahmins and Śrāmanas among the Yonas.

Some relatively early Buddhist texts speak explicitly and specifically about the Magas. One of these is the Mahāvibhāṣā, a Buddhist compendium from Kashmir that presumably dates from the second century CE.356 Interestingly, it speaks of barbarians (mleccha) in the West who are called Magas.357 It does not call them Brahmins, and ascribes to them the view that “there is absolutely no sin in behaving lustily with one’s mother, daughter, elder or younger sister, daughter-in-law, or the like”, hardly a view Indian Brahmins would like to be identified with.358 Bhāvya’s more recent Tarkajvālā, too, refers to the Magas, in the following words:359 “Magas and so on are the followers of a perverted belief (vrata), i.e. Persians and others who live in the land of barbarians (mleccha). … The doctrines of the Magas … have many points fairly common to the teachings of the Vedas. … The Vedas are not a proper means for knowing the Dharma. As they teach the illicit sexual relation (agamyā-gamana), they are like the books of the Nāstikas and of the Persians.” Here the teachings of the Magas are compared with those of the Veda, but the comparison itself shows the difference: the Magas are not Brahmins, and their texts are not the Vedas.

Vasubandhu’s Abhidharmakośabhāṣya does not mention the Magas by name, but ascribes the same immoral custom to Persians; it does not suggest that these Persians are Brahmins.360 The same can be said about Dharmakīrti’s Pramāṇavārttika.361 References of this kind to the Persians do not stop here. Silk (2009: 85 f.) observes: “Similar references are repeated in later Buddhist philosophical literature as examples of archetypical immoral behavior. Parallel references also appear in Xuanzang’s seventh-century record of his travels to India, Datang Xiyou ji (Great Tang Records of the Western Regions), and in the Wang Och’önjuguk chön (Account of Travels to the Five Countries of India) by the eighth-century Korean Buddhist monk-traveler Hyech’o, both of whom refer to the Persians as those who practice incestuous marriages between mothers and sons. Nearly identical references occur in classical (Greek and Roman), non-Buddhist Indian, Arabic, and Chinese sources, all of which view Persians as those who engage in such immoral unions. The Indian Buddhist sources thus share in a judgment widespread among Persia’s neighbors across the ancient world.”362 None of these texts identify those Persians with Brahmins.

There is one exception. The Karmaprajñāpāti, an early Sarvāstivāda Abhidharma text, ascribes this same immoral behaviour to what it calls Maga-Brahmins, who live in

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356 It refers to the “former king, Kaniṣka, of Gandhāra” (Willemen, Dessein & Cox 1998: 232; Dessein 2009: 44); Kaniṣka may have started his realm in 127 CE (Falk 2001; Golzio 2008)
358 An exception has to be made for the godharma or govrama; see Acharya 2013. Perhaps this explains the critical remarks of the Tarkajvālā. As Acharya (2013: 118-119) points out, Bhāvya is aware of the immoral behavior of the Pāṣupatas.
360 Abhidh-k-bh(P) p. 241 l. 9.
362 For further details, see Silk 2008. For the situation in Persia, see Macuch 1991; Herrenschmidt 1994.
the West. This might suggest that the Magas of Persia were looked upon as Brahmins, at least by the author of the Karmaprajñāpīti and presumably by some of his contemporaries. In view of the evidence considered so far, this is hard to believe. The most probable explanation for this strange characterization of the Magas as Maga-Brahmins is as follows. The Karmaprajñāpīti has only been preserved in a late (8-9th cent. CE) Tibetan translation, and it is conceivable that the Tibetan translators added the word Brahmin on the basis of their ‘knowledge’ that Magas are Brahmins, which they were at that time in India. The expression maga-brāhmana may be late: it appears for the first time in an inscription in 861 CE. Alternatively, it should not be forgotten that the Karmaprajñāpīti is a Buddhist text, and that the Buddhists had a tendency to compare Magas and Brahmins, both of whom indulged, in their opinion, in immoral practices; this we know from the Tarkajvālā passage considered above. But whatever the correct explanation of the expression Maga-Brahmin in the surviving translation of the Karmaprajñāpīti, it seems clear that the Buddhist texts considered inform us about Magas who lived in the West (and not therefore in India) and who were not considered Brahmins.

It is safe to conclude from what precedes that no Brahmin would believe that the Brahmanical order of society prevailed in Persia. And the foreign priests who had settled in India could not possibly base their demand to be accepted as Brahmins on the claim that they came from a region in the Northwest that had adopted this order of society.

And they didn’t. Modern scholars may be tempted to identify Śākadvīpa with the territory of the Śakas, who ruled in India’s northwest and had adopted many features of Iranian culture, or with Iran proper including greater Iran, but there is no Indian text I know of that does so. Śākadvīpa is a continent far away, separated from Jambūdvīpa by an ocean, and it is totally unwarranted to believe that any of the classical authors who wrote about it would have had the slightest sympathy for these modern ideas.

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363 Silk 2008: 436; 2009: 84: “In the West there are those called Maga-Brahmins”.
365 Silk (2008: 436 n. 6) dedicates a footnote to the Tibetan term bram ze mchu skyes, which stands for Maga-Brahmin.
366 Cp. Chenet 1993: 385: “De ces résistances auxquelles se heurtèrent les Magas témoigne sans doute le fait qu’il faille attendre relativement tard pour voir mentionner pour la première fois expressis verbis un Maga brāhmana du nom de Mātravi dans une inscription de Ghatiyāl de Kakkarka au Rāiputana datant de 861 de notre ère.”
367 Gail’s (1978: 343) remark to the extent that “die Inder die sozialen Schichten anderer Völker nur von ihrer eigenen Klassifizierung her zu verstehen vermochten” should not be interpreted to mean that priests elsewhere where automatically promoted to Brahmanical status.
368 So Arora 1971: 54; 1972: 30 f. Arora refers to different tentative identifications in modern scholarly literature. See further Gail 1978: 342 f.; Shrava 1981: 5 f.; Srivastava 1969: 253-254. Vassilkov (1998: 143) is more careful when he calls Śākadvīpa “a mythical place-name which disguised the name of historical Śaka/Śaka people, the Scythians or north-eastern Iranians”. It is of course not impossible that the name Śākadvīpa was once inspired by the Śakas (Bailey 1970: 69), but this tells us nothing about the position of this continent in mythical geography.
369 Cp. Vatsyāyana’s Nyāyabhāṣya on sūtra 2.1.52: svargah apsarasah uttarāh kuravah sapta dvīpāḥ samudro lokasamnīveṣa ity evamāder apratyakṣasyārthasya na śabdamātriḥ pratyaṇāḥ, kim tarhi? āptair ayaṃ uktāḥ śabda ity atāḥ sampratyaṇāḥ, viparyayena sampratyaṇābhāvāḥ/“It is not because of words on their own that one believes in the existence of imperceptible objects such as ‘heaven’, ‘the Apsaras’, ‘the Northern Kurus’, ‘the seven continents’, ‘the ocean’, or ‘the shape of
This modifies our question to a considerable extent. No longer do we need to find out why Indian Brahmans, contrary to their habits, were willing to accept in their midst immigrants from a neighbouring country in the Northwest. The fact is that they didn’t, or if they did, not knowingly. They did not accept immigrants from a neighbouring country in the Northwest as Brahmans, but rather immigrants from a remote continent, not reachable by ordinary travel. And these immigrants had always been Brahmans, for unlike the countries in the Northwest, society in the remote continent of Śākadvipa was organized according to Brahmanical principles.

But why should immigrants from Śākadvipa be granted privileges that were not granted to visitors from neighbouring countries? The answer is simple and straightforward: Because quite independently of the arrival of the Magas, and presumably already before this event, there was a Brahmanical tradition that maintained that the remote continent of Śākadvipa was inhabited by people who followed the Brahmanical order of society. This is clear from a passage in the Bhṛṣmaparvan of the Mahābhārata, which says a great deal about Śākadvipa and its inhabitants, but nothing whatsoever about migrating Magas. Here it is:370

In that [continent] there are four meritorious countries, esteemed by the people: Maga, Maṣaka, Mānasa and Mandaga. Maga is mainly inhabited by Brahmans who love their tasks. In Maṣaka there are virtuous Kṣatriyas who are generous in accordance with the wishes of all. In Mānasa the Vaiśyas survive by their tasks; they are brave, devoted to the wishes of all, bent on dharma and artha. The Śūdras in Mandaga, for their part, are men constantly pious. There is there neither king nor punishment, whether big or small. The [people] preserve dharma with regard to each other by [sticking to] their own dharma. This much can be said about that continent. This much you should hear about Śākadvipa, full of splendor.

The author of this passage clearly thought of the continent of Śākadvipa as exemplifying the Brahmanical social order, in the sense that its inhabitants included Brahmans, Kṣatriyas, Vaiśyas and Śūdras, and presumably no others.371 It also seems clear that the Magas, Maṣaka, Mānasa and Mandaga designate countries — usually through the plural (cf. Renou 1984: 275: “Le pluriel s’emploie dans diverses catégories de noms à valeur collective, … noms de pays désignés par le peuple qui l’occupe (angāh)”), once through the singular (mandage, v. 35) — not social classes. In other words, in this passage the Magas are not all Brahmans, the Maṣakas not all Kṣatriyas, etc. See in this connection Pirart’s observation cited above.

370 Mhbh 6.12.33-37: tatra punyā janapadāḥ catvāro lokasammatāḥ/ magāḥ ca maṣakāḥ caiva mānasā mandagāḥ tathā/ 33 // magā brāhmaṇabhūyiṣṭhāḥ svakarmaniratā nṛpa/ maṣakesu tu rājanyā dhārmikāḥ sarvakāmadāḥ// 34 // mānaseṣu mahārāja vaiśyāḥ karmopajīvīnāḥ/ sarvakāmamadāyuṭkāṭāḥ śūra dharmārthaniścītāḥ/ śūdrās tu maṇḍage nityam puṇiṣu dharmaśīlānāḥ// 35// na tatra rājā rājendra na daṇḍo na ca daṇḍikā/ svadharmenaiva dharmaṁ ca te rakṣanti parasparam// 36 // etāvad eva śakyam tu tasmin dvīpe prabhāṣītum/ etāvad eva śravāyaṁ śākadvīpe mahaḥaṣjī/ 37//. Note that in this passage the four names Maga, Maṣaka, Mānasa and Mandaga designate countries — usually through the plural (cf. Renou 1984: 275: “Le pluriel s’emploie dans diverses catégories de noms à valeur collective, … noms de pays désignés par le peuple qui l’occupe (angāh)”), once through the singular (mandage, v. 35) — not social classes. In other words, in this passage the Magas are not all Brahmans, the Maṣakas not all Kṣatriyas, etc. See in this connection Pirart’s observation cited above.

371 This passage does not justify Scheffelowitz’s following remark (1933: 316): “Zur Zeit der Entstehung des Mahābh. hatten die Indoskythen unter Einfluss der brahmanischen Kultur die Form des indischen Kastenwesens schon längst übernommen …”
Sāmba Purāṇa has either directly undergone the influence of this passage, or of a similar passage that also influenced the Mahābhārata.\textsuperscript{372}

The Mahābhārata itself does not identify Śākadvīpa with Persia or with any other region near India, nor do other ancient Indian texts that I know of. Śākadvīpa is a remote continent. Earlier in the same chapter, the Bhīṣmaparvan tells us that Śākadvīpa is twice as large as Jambūdvīpa and is on all sides surrounded by a sea of milk.\textsuperscript{373}

Of particular interest in the present discussion is that the Bhīṣmaparvan says nothing about a possible link of the Magas of Śākadvīpa with sun-worship.\textsuperscript{374} In the Sāmba Purāṇa it is the sun who provides information about Śākadvīpa, and who adds that he has created the inhabitants of that continent and given them the four Vedas.\textsuperscript{375} This confirms our impression that an independent mythico-geographical notion that found expression in the Mahābhārata was subsequently put to use in a context to which it originally did not belong.

Theoretically one might speculate that the original account of Śākadvīpa included already an account of Maga Brahmins settling in Jambūdvīpa, but there is no evidence to support this. The position that the Purāṇic account is older than the one found in the Mahābhārata has been defended by Hilgenberg (1934: XLIV) but was subsequently rejected in a detailed rejoinder by Belvalkar (1939). This position has indeed little to recommend itself. And the view that Śākadvīpa has been provided with a Brahmanically organized society for no other reason than to justify the Brahmanical claim of certain sun-priests in India seems implausible.

Our reflections appear to justify the following picture. For some reason so far unknown there was a belief in Brahmanical circles that there was a remote continent called Śākadvīpa whose population consisted of Brahmins, Ksatriyas, Vaiśyas and Śūdras. Independently of this tradition, and presumably at some later date, sun-priests from Persia settled in India. In order to be recognized as Brahmins in their new surroundings, they or their descendents made the claim that they were the Magas of Śākadvīpa, who had been called hither.

It is not impossible that the myth of Śākadvīpa and its Magas had originally been created under the influence of bits of information that had reached India from Persia.\textsuperscript{376} In

\textsuperscript{372} For further similar Purāṇic passages, see Kirfel 1920: 119 ff.; 122 f.; 126 f.; Hilgenberg 1934: XLIII.

\textsuperscript{373} Mhbh 6.12.8-9: śākadvīpaṃ ca vāksyāmi yathāvad iha pārthivaḥ śṛṇu me tvam yathānāyam bruvataḥ kurmanvanaḥ// 8 // jambūdvīpaḥ prayāmeṇa dvigunah sa narādhipaḥ viśkambhena mahārāja sāgaro 'pi vibhāgaśah/ kṣīrodha bharaśreṣṭha yena samparivāritaḥ// 9 //. The last line does not state “that the Kshiroda Sāgara or the Caspian Sea was encircled in parts by the Śākadvīpa”, as claimed by Shrava (1981: 7). Parasher (1991: 248), basing herself on Shrava, claims that the epis and Purāṇas “inform us that among the Śākas, the Magas were the brāhmanas, the Māgadhas were the ksatriyas, the Mānasas were the vaiśyas and the Mandagas were the śūdras”; this is of course incorrect.


\textsuperscript{375} Sāmba Purāṇa 26.32-33 (Stietencron 1966: 47): tejasaḥ ca madhyasya nirmitā vai purā mayā/ tebhyaḥ vedāḥ ca cātvārah sarahasyā mayeritāḥ/ vedoktaṁ vividhaṁ stotraiḥ parair guhyair mayā kṛtaṁ/.

\textsuperscript{376} Timothy Lubin (forthcoming b), in the paper he read at the 224th meeting of the American Oriental Society, Phoenix 2014, wonders whether the story of Śākadvīpa with its ideal Brahmanical society is the result of claims by the Śākas of belonging to the local Brahmanical elite, and therefore of being legitimate rulers.
that sense it may be maintained that the claim of the immigrant Magas was correct, but only in this artificial sense. The Magas of India did not base their claim to social status on history in our sense of the term, but on mythology. Had they based their claim on the fact that their ancestors had arrived from Persia (a fact presumably unknown to them), they would not have been accepted as Brahmins in India. Had they known that their ancestors had come from Persia, there would have been ways to say so, and say so clearly. But the Magas said no such thing: they did not claim to come from Persia, they claimed to come from Śākadvīpa. And Śākadvīpa was not situated to the west or northwest of India: it was a continent very far removed from the continent called Jambūdvīpa in which India had its place.

Inscriptional and textual evidence indicates that there were indeed priests called Magas in India associated with the sun-cult. Varāhamihira’s Brhatasmhitā (59.19 [ed. Tripāṭhī], 60.19 [ed. Bhat]) mentions them, and indeed, Varāhamihira himself may have been a Maga.377 It is even possible that Sphujidhvaja’s Yavanajātaka was composed by a Maga.378

“There is an Inscription at Govindapur in the Gayā District dated Śaka 1059, corresponding to 1137–38 A.D., in the opening stanza of which the Magas, who sprang from the sun, are represented to have been brought into the country by Śāmbara.379 There are traces of Magas elsewhere, and there are Brāhmaṇas of that name in Rajputana and some other provinces of Northern India.”380 The Brhadārtha Purāṇa (3.13.52) has a “reference to [a] devala, who was brought from Śākadvīp by Suparna (Garuda) and called sākadvīp vipra (brāhmaṇa)” (Furui 2013: 205). It reminds us that these Brahmins, being temple priests (devala[ka]), commanded less respect than other Brahmins.

Among the earliest references to the Magas in India we must count the Brakhmanai Magoi in Ptolemy’s Geography (ca. 150 CE).382 This agrees with the


378 Its author attained a “vision of truth [that] came from the grace of the Sun”, and if Mak’s recent study is to be trusted, the text was originally written in a language different from Sanskrit, but also different from Greek (Mak 2013: 12 f.). Indeed, “It appears that the Yavanajātaka is an original amalgamation of Greek and Indian astral sciences” (p. 13); “the text Sphujidhvaja composed appears to be original, based on an indigenous tradition where elements of Greek and Indian astral sciences were thoroughly amalgamated” (p. 16). See further Mak 2013a; 2014.

379 See Kielhorn 1894: 333/338: “Hail to that gem of the three worlds, the divine Aruna, whose presence sanctifies the milk-ocean-encircled Śākadvīpa where the Brahmins are named Magas! There a race of twice-born [sprang] from the sun’s own body, grazed by the lathe, whom Śāmbara himself brought hither.”

380 R. D. Bhandarkar 1913/1982: 219. An inscription from Ghatiyālā, twenty-two miles west-northwest of Jōdhpur, dated saṃvat 918, was written by a Maga (D. R. Bhandarkar 1907–08: 279, 281). There are also Śākadvīpiya Brahmins in modern India; see, e.g., Risley 1891: 159 f.; Mitra 1953: 238 (“Sakadvipī”).

381 See § IIA.1.3, below.

hypothesis that these priests and their sun-cult may have found their way into the subcontinent at the time of the Kuśānas or slightly before them, under the Śakas.\(^{383}\)

IIA.1.3. Temple priests and other Bramins of debatable origin

D. R. Bhandarkar made the following remark about the main deities of Hinduism (1981: 123):

> It is very doubtful whether Śiva, Vishṇu, the Sun and Mahāsena can be considered to be Brāhmaṇic deities even in the Gupta period. In modern times there is hardly any important shrine of Vishṇu, Śiva or Ambikā which is not in charge of a Brāhmaṇa priest who alone has the right to show the god or goddess to the devotees on payment of money, or the making of offerings, or both, which is a source of income to the priest. But there is no inscription of the Gupta period to show that the deities noted above came down to the Gupta period from the Rīg-Vedic times, with the Brahmical or original character stamped upon them.

The infiltration of non-Brahmanical deities into Hinduism has been considered in § I.1.3, and we cannot but agree with Bhandarkar. Temple worship,\(^{384}\) too, is a relatively recent phenomenon, which does not gain importance until after the period we are considering.\(^{385}\) Moreover, within Brahmical circles there has been relatively little esteem for Brahmins who offered their services to temples.\(^{386}\) Traditional Brahmical religious practice, it may be recalled, had no place for temple worship, nor indeed for images of gods. The transition to a time in which there were Brahmins connected with temple and image worship appears to have been difficult, with internal divisions among Brahmins as to the suitability for Brahmins to perform such functions. Literary evidence shows that Brahmins involved in temple and image worship (sometimes called devalaka)\(^{387}\) were despised by their more orthodox confreres; sometimes their very Brahmical status was

\(^{383}\) Al-Biruni’s remarks about the Magians in India ”where they are called Maga” (Sachau 1888: I: 21) no doubt concern the Parsis, who maintained their Persian identity and had reached India some time before him, but many centuries after the Maga Brahmins.

\(^{384}\) See on this Olivelle 2009a.

\(^{385}\) Pilgrimage is important from the time of the Mahābhārata onward, but is slow in finding its way into Brahmical law books. Cf. Jacobsen 2013: 12-13: “It is … noteworthy that no formal treatment of pilgrimage is found in any of the law books and that the texts on dharma usually did not include sections on tīrthas and tīrthayātṛā. In law books like Manusmṛti and Yājñavalkyasmṛti, tīrtha and tīrthayātṛā have an unimportant position and are not a topic of discussion. In Manusmṛti, it is mentioned in an example as something one does not need to do (Manusmṛti 8.92). Viṣṇusmṛti devotes one whole chapter, Chapter 85, to a description of the tīrthas which are recommended for performance of śrāddha, but the Viṣṇusmṛti was probably a late work and, according to Patrick Olivelle …, composed between 700 CE and 1000 CE.” See also Jacobsen 2013: 53: “Traditions of sacred sites have probably existed outside of Brahmical ritual tradition before their inclusion in the Mahābhārata.”

\(^{386}\) See, e.g., Stietencron 1977; Appadurai 1983. Already Śabara, the famous Mīmāṃsaka (fifth/sixth century CE), expresses his lack of esteem; see § IIA.4.3, below.

\(^{387}\) See Colas 1996: 133-140.
The Pāṇcarātrins are an interesting example: faced with scepticism from orthodox Brahmins, they attempted to prove their Brahmanical status, and along with it the orthodox status of their rituals and texts. But the criticism by orthodox Brahmins was severe:

[The Pāṇcarātrin:] How can you say that Brahmins, the foremost of those belonging to the three caste-classes, are not educated?

[The critic responds:] That is incorrect. Those [Pāṇcarātrins] do not belong to the three upper caste-classes, and they are even less Brahmins. For we do not perceive, once our sense-organs have come into contact with them, a specific species called Brahmin-hood, that is supposedly present in only some specific bodies and absent in others, and that is different from man-hood. Features such as a tuft of hair on the head, a sacrificial thread and so on, which are prescribed for Brahmins etc., cannot confer Brahmin-hood, nor do they make it known, because these features can also be observed in the case of certain vile Śūdras and so on. It follows that the basis for knowing a Brahmin is the established and uncontested usage of the elderly, and nothing else. What is more, people in the world do not use the word Brahmin without hesitation to refer to the Bhāgavatas. On the contrary, they speak about the two in different terms: "Here there are Brahmins, there there are Bhāgavatas."

Marion Rastelli draws my attention to a passage in Jayanta Bhaṭṭa's Āgamaṃadambara, where an orthodox Brahmin expresses his annoyance about the fact "that these Pāṇcarātrika Bhāgavatas should adopt brahminical manners. They mix with brahminds and have no scruples about using the form of greeting that only we may use to our equals. They recite the Pāṇcarātra scriptures with a special pattern of accented syllables, as if

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they were taking the text of Veda as their example. ‘We are brahmins’, they say of themselves, and demand that others speak of them in the same way. Take the Śaivas and their ilk: they are not part of the system of the four social estates, they reject the life-periods determined by the Veda and the Smṛtis and they set themselves apart by adopting a differing doctrine. But these fellows say that ‘We have been truly brahmins ever since our birth, for a long succession of ancestors’, and in the same way they imitate the system of the four life-periods: this is a great torment.” Original Brahmohn-hood is crucial because, as the Mīmǎṃsaka Kumārila points out, “the ‘dharmic character’ (dharmatva) of the rites performed in the temples of deities is, like several other practices, approved because those who perform them are the same as the performers of ‘Vedic sacrifices’” (TanVār on sūtra 1.3.7, p. 126: vaidikaih kartṛśāmānyāt; Colas 2004: 155).

The question cannot be avoided whether the temple priests concerned were originally Brahmans who had decided to take up this new profession, or rather non-Brahmins engaged in temple service who subsequently claimed Brahmanical status. In other words: Were these people first Brahmans and only later temple priests, or were they first temple priests and only later Brahmans? It is in this context important to remember that temples came to play important roles also in non-religious realms. Veluthat (2009: 78), for example, argues “that the temple played a role in medieval south India going far beyond a mere ‘religious institution’. It had functions of a social, economic, political and cultural nature and they were interrelated in a most complex way. It is only when one is able to appreciate it in its entirety that one will be able to grasp the complexity and also to see how there was a rush to patronize the temple, which has to be understood as prompted by more than piety. And, naturally, the patronage was more than reciprocated.” There were therefore plenty of reasons, on the one hand, for Brahmans to claim a role of eminence in temple worship, and, on the other, for temple priests to claim a position of eminence in society, and therefore Brahmanical status.

Temple and image worship was probably in the hands of non-Brahmins before Brahmans turned to this activity. The Matsya Purāṇa speaks in this connection of heretics (pāśāndin) (267: 32). This suggests that non-Brahmanical temple priests came to be replaced by Brahmanical ones in a number of temples. It seems in any case safe to follow Granoff (2006: 390) in speaking of “efforts to impose on a large scale Brahmunic

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391 Brahmanical fear about Śūdras usurping the avocations of Brahmans finds expression in descriptions of the shortcomings of the Kali-Yuga (R. S. Sharma 2001: 54), and may, at least in part, be inspired by the existence of non-Brahmanical temple priests. Recall at this point that temples were sometimes the way through which kings reasserted their superiority vis-à-vis Brahmans (Francis 2013: 13 f.).
392 Not everyone shares this opinion. “Heinrich von Stietencron has suggested that we view the rise of image worship in terms of a schism within the Brahmin class. ‘It was not merely a question of defence of Brahmanic privileges against a new group of religious specialists rising from the lower strata of society,’ he writes. ‘The texts rather suggest that the conflict was mainly within the Brahman class’ (1977: 126 [52]). The shift from Vedic altar to Hindu temple, from invisible celestials to divine icons, he argues, ‘was accompanied by bitter feuds between traditionalists and innovators.’” (Davis 2001: 115). However, “Stietencron argues that the custodians of images, the devalakas, were śūdras but that some Brahmans started to perform services for the shrines (Stietencron 1977).” (Jacobsen 2013: 68)
393 Granoff 2006: 391.
rituals on an originally non-Brahmanic public cult of images”. But were these rites carried out by ‘fallen Brahmins’, Brahmins who reduced their status by abandoning the old Vedic rites in favour of new temple rites? Or rather by temple priest who successfully claimed Brahmanical status and therefore rather rose in rank? Stories in the Purāṇas favour the former alternative. Consider the following:

… the Śiva Purāṇa includes a story about the origin of the priests who worship the liṅga. They are called batukas and the lineage is traced back to a Brahmin who had violated the rules of ritual purity by having sexual intercourse and not bathing before he worshipped Śiva on the night of Śivarātri. Eventually Gaurī takes pity on him and adopts him as her son. Śiva decrees that the descendants of this fallen Brahmin are to worship the liṅga.

Another story occurs in the Skanda Purāṇa: The sage Durvāsas had asked the Brahmin community for land to build a Śiva temple, but the Brahmans were too busy with their Vedic study to take much notice of his request. He curses them and one Brahmin attempts to placate the sage, offering him the land he desired. In turn this Brahmin, ‘Suśīla’, “of irreproachable conduct” is cursed by the others to be called ‘Duḥśīla’, “of wicked conduct”. He must move outside the city and he is not permitted to take part in any of the ritual activities of the other Brahmans.

Also Michael Willis, in his book The Archaeology of Hindu Ritual (2009), appears to think that Brahmans, i.e. real original Brahmans, consciously decided to become temple priests. To cite his own words (p. 122): “The new relationship between pūjā, priest, image, patron, and land was a powerful synergism that produced temple-based Hinduism. This world — in part Vedic but radically different from what went before — did not emerge in an organic, subconscious, or accidental fashion from some sort of socio-religious plasma; it was consciously created by members of the priesthood — an intellectual and religious elite with clear aims and certain purposes.”

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394 See also Granoff 1997. Elsewhere Granoff (2004) points out that there may have been “more than a slight hesitation about the status of images and their worship among the orthodox circles of all of India’s classical religions” (p. 21). Granoff continues (p. 23): “images were not at home in the world of Brahminic ritual, that is, in the world of ritual controlled by Brahmin priests, and it is that world that is reflected in many of the rituals of the purāṇas. That images do not necessarily play a role in such rituals is not surprising.” Colas (2004) documents the increasing acceptance of image worship in a number of Brahmanical texts from, roughly, the second half of the first millennium CE; see further Colas 2012a.
395 Kulke (1997: 96) states: “An important characteristic of the courtly cults of [the] early local nuclear areas was … the incorporation of mighty local cults and the (temporary) integration of their non-Brāhmaṇa priests into the courtly circle.”
397 Granoff 2006: 392, with reference to the Nāgarakṛtā, one of the later sections of the Skanda Purāṇa.
398 Cf. Willis 2009: 111: “priests were directing the offerings from the domestic environment to the temple and attracted funding to support these rites in the new location”. This is referred back to in the index as “brāhmaṇas as agents in creation of temple religion”.

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is admittedly somewhat ambiguous, because the expression ‘members of the priesthood’ might include ‘new Brahmans’, perhaps originally non-Brahmanical priests, who joined in the creation of this new world, meanwhile claiming Brahmanical status.

It is perhaps not surprising that Brahmanical literature — virtually the only surviving literature that provides us with information about Brahmans — avoids casting doubt on the purity of Brahmanical descent. In spite of this, some passages in Brahmanical literature suggest that irregularities have taken place. The story of the Magas, told and analyzed above, illustrates this: the Magas were not originally Brahmans, yet succeeded in becoming accepted as Brahmans. And the Magas may not be the only example of this kind.

Remember at this point that a passage of the Yājñavalkyasmrī, which we studied above, opens up a theoretical possibility for non-Brahmins to become Brahmans by doing the job of Brahmans. The sūtra concerned speaks about a rise in status — jātyutkarsa is the term — and there is no reason to doubt that the obtainment of Brahmanical status, too, is part of the subject talked about.

Some modern scholars do not hesitate to state that such changes of status may in fact have been widespread. Consider the following observation by A. L. Basham:

> For all the rigidity of the class system the brāhmans soon lost their racial purity, and it has even been suggested that, as Āryan culture expanded, schools of aboriginal sorcerers and medicine men managed to obtain a footing in the brāhmanic order …

M. N. Srinivas states, similarly:

> A potent source of social mobility in pre-British India was the fluidity of the political system. Such fluidity was not limited to any particular part of India, but characterized the system everywhere. It constituted an important, though not the only, avenue to social mobility. In order to capture political power, however, a caste or its local section had to have a martial tradition, numerical strength, and preferably also ownership of a large quantity of arable land. Once it had captured political power it had to Sanskritize its ritual and style of life and lay claim to being Kshatriya. It had to patronize (or even create) Brahmans who would minister to it on ritual occasions, and produce an appropriate myth supporting the group’s claim to Kshatriya status. The establishment of Pax Britannica resulted in freezing the political system and blocked this avenue to mobility.

\(^{399}\) There are, on the other hand, texts that claim Brahmanical status for people whose status is in doubt. The Vaidyas of Bengal are an example, studied in Haag 2012. Even Brahmans who accept each other’s status can be critical of each other: “When the Śākhās criticize each other, they call each other liars and followers of untruth and irrational practices. This made the relations between Brahmans belonging to different Vedas and different Śākhās very complex, and they were fraught with issues very difficult to resolve.” (Deshpande 2012: 345). Deshpande presents some documented cases of ritual conflicts between different Vedas and Śākhās on pp. 346-348.

\(^{400}\) Brunner (1964) suggested a Śūdra origin for certain Brahmans; Colas (1996: 152) shows that her arguments are not valid for Vaikhānasa Brahmans.

\(^{401}\) Basham 1967: 140.

\(^{402}\) Srinivas 1966: 31; emphasis added.
And Vijay Nath observes:  

That the vastly inflated brāhmaṇa class, spread all over the country, could have comprehended brāhmaṇas of only pure descent belonging to the middle country alone seems hardly credible.

Nath (2001: 25; 2001a: 56-59) presents a number of stories from a variety of texts that suggest that this or that group of Brahmins is not of ‘pure’ descent, but consists rather of descendants of originally non-Brahmin ancestors. She concludes (2001a: 59):

There is, thus, enough evidence to suggest that the brāhmaṇa caste stratum by early medieval times also comprehended elements other than those of strictly pure and mid-landic origin. Large number of tribal and aboriginal priestly groups appear to have gained entry into its fold as low-grade brāhmaṇas.

Kosambi (1975: 134-135) thinks that Brahmins were already genetically mixed during the centuries preceding the Common Era:

The Brahmins were ... genetically mixed at the time, as follows from Patañjali’s comment on [Pāṇini] 2.2.6: 404 “When one has seen a certain black (person), the colour of a heap of black beans, seated in the marketplace, one definitely concludes (without inquiry) that that is not a Brahmin; one is (intuitively) convinced thereof.” As against this, there is a clear formula in [Brhadārayaka Upaniṣad] 6.4.16 for the birth of a black son to a Brahmin: 405 “Now in case one wishes that a swarthy (śyāmo) son with red eyes be born to me, that he be able to repeat the three vedas, that he attain the full length of life! They two (the parents) should have rice boiled with water and should eat it prepared with ghee. They two are likely to beget (such a son).”

These quotations remind us that textual sources do little beyond providing suggestions. They do not help us to assess the full extent to which ‘irregularities’ have tainted the claimed purity of Brahmanical descent. A more accurate assessment of the way in which Brahmanism spread and, in doing so, remained (or did not remain) faithful to its own principles may only be attained through the analysis of the genetic proximity of Brahmins in different parts of India, keeping in mind that Brahmins may not have been a homogeneous group even at the beginning of their spread. Such an analysis has never been undertaken, and constitutes a challenge for the future. 406

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403 Nath 2001a: 57.
404 This translates Mahā-bh I p. 411 l. 29 – p. 412 l. 412: na hy ayaṁ kālam maśarāśivarṇam āpāna āśīnam dṛṣṭvādhyavasyati brāhmaṇa ‘yam iti/ nirjñātām tasya bhavati/.
405 This translates BĀrUp 6.4.16 (p. 158): atha ya icchet putro me śyāmo lohitākṣo jāyeta trīn vedān anubruvitā sarvam āyur iyād ity udaudanaṁ pācayitvā sarpiṣmantaṁ aśnīyātāṁ/ īśvarau janayitava/.
406 It seems therefore premature to assume that Brahmins at the time of Patañjali had the same physical attributes as today. Yet this is what Aklujkar (2008: 184) does when discussing the adjectives that Patañjali uses in connection with Brahmins. Three of these — gaura ‘fair-skinned, one having a light complexion’, pingalākṣa ‘cat-eyed or brown-eyed’ and kapila-keśa ‘one with tawny hair’ — refer to physical appearance. Aklujkar concludes: “All three apply to Kashmirian
IIA.2. Admittance

The requirement of pure descent, as we saw in § IIA.1.2-3, did not suffice to prevent outsiders from claiming, and sometimes obtaining, Brahanical status. And yet, the Brahanical theoreticians had done what they could to avoid this. The mere claim of pure descent was not enough to be recognized as a Brahmin. Every (male) Brahmin had to go through a number of ‘sacraments’ (saṃskāra), rituals (rites of passage) that marked different transitions in his life.

It appears that these sacraments did not go back to ancient times. There are indeed reasons to think that they were created during the formative centuries we have been studying, i.e. the last centuries preceding the Common Era.

IIA.2.1. Vedic initiation (upanayana) and other sacraments (saṃskāra)

The most important of these sacraments is the one known by the name upanayana. In classical Brahmanism this is the rite of initiation par excellence and counts as a ‘second birth’ for the candidates, who are henceforth ‘twice-born’ (dvija or dvijāti). Only those who have undergone this second birth are entitled to learn to recite the Veda, and the upanayana can be looked upon as a barrier that prevents outsiders from acquiring this secret knowledge. The upanayana leaves a visible trace, which will for ever after identify the initiate as a Brahmin: the yajñopavīta or ‘sacred thread’, which the Brahmin is henceforth expected to wear at all times. This, at any rate, is the situation that supposedly has prevailed since time immemorial.

In reality the situation may have been more complex. As we saw in § I.1.3 above, Patrick Olivelle (2012) has drawn attention to the fact that the yajñopavīta, ‘sacred thread’, is a relatively recent feature in the rite of Vedic initiation (upanayana). To quote his own words (Olivelle 2012: 119):

The yajñopavīta (or brahmasūtra), the sacrificial cord commonly called the ‘sacred thread’, is such a central feature of the ceremony of Vedic initiation (upanayana) that in modern parlance it is often referred to as the ‘thread ceremony’. In the classical period, Brahmanical identity was often based on the constant and uninterrupted wearing of the sacrificial cord. Yet, the ancient rite of upanayana given in the Grhyasūtras and the Dharmasūtras make no mention of the sacrificial cord. Its compulsory wearing by those who have undergone Vedic initiation is found for the first time in the Dharmasūtras of Baudhāyana and Vasiṣṭha, thus providing us a chronological boundary between these two later texts and the earlier ones of Āpastamba and Gautama.

Brahmins, and are unlikely to be thought of as germane or widely applicable in the case of Brahmins from other parts of India.” We cannot exclude the possibility that at the time of Patañjali these three qualities were thought of as applicable to all or most Brahmins.
This means that one important feature of the rite of Vedic initiation, and the most visible at that, turns out to be of relatively recent origin, and may not date back further than the last centuries preceding the Common Era.

In the same article, Olivelle undermines the ancient origin of the notion of a twice-born (2012: 119):

The term and concept dvija, twice-born, is of recent origin. In all likelihood it was a theological innovation created sometime after Patañjali. Yet, in most of the Dharmasūtras, ... with the notable exception of Āpastamba, the twice-born is a central category in their theology and in their articulation of the varṇa ideology.

All this raises the question how old the rite of Vedic initiation (upanayana) itself really is, and whether this rite, too, was perhaps introduced during the last few centuries preceding the Common Era, perhaps with the purpose of preventing outsiders from successfully claiming Brahmanical status.

In order to pursue this question, we have to distinguish between customs and rites. There can be no doubt that Vedic recitation was already old at the time we are considering, and this means that young boys were taken to (upa-nī) teachers who taught them this. This custom, and the form it may have taken in ancient times, is not relevant to the present discussion. This custom was however replaced by a rite of initiation, a samskāra, and we wish to know when this happened.

The claim that the upanayana was ‘ritualized’ at some point of time was already made in 1941 by Pandurang Vaman Kane, in the first edition of his History of Dharmaśāstra (HistDh II/I p. 268-269):

The word ‘upanayana’ can be derived and explained in two ways: (1) taking (the boy) near the ācārya, (2) rite by which the boy is taken to the ācārya. The first sense appears to have been the original one and when an extensive ritual came to be associated with upanayana the second came to be the sense of the word. Such an ancient work as the [Āpastamba Dharmasūtra] I.1.1. 19 says that upanayana is a samskāra (purificatory rite) ...

Having subsequently discussed various passages from Vedic literature that deal with brahma-cārins, Kane observed (p. 273):

It appears from the above and from the Upaniṣad passages set out immediately below that originally Upanayana was a very simple matter. The would-be student came to the teacher with a samidh in his hand and told the teacher that he desired to enter the stage of studenthood and begged to be allowed to be a brahma-cārī living with the teacher. There were no elaborate ceremonies like those described in the grhya sūtras.

All this changed. From a ‘very simple matter’, the upanayana became a complicated ritual. By way of example, Kane sets out in full its presentation in the Āśvalāyana Grhyasūtra (Kane 1941: 281-283; same page numbering in the second edition):407

407 This is a free rendering of Āśvalāyana Grhyasūtra 1.19.8 - 1.22.9 (ed. Gokhale; tr. Oldenberg 1.19.10 - 1.22.11): alamkṛtaṁ kumāraṁ kuṣaṅkṛtaṁ āhataṁ vāsasā samvītam aineyenār


Let him initiate the boy who is decked, whose hair (on the head) is shaved (and arranged), who wears a new garment or an antelope skin if a brāhmaṇa, ruru skin if a kṣatriya, goat's skin if a vaśya; if they put on garments they should put on dyed ones, reddish-yellow, red and yellow (for a brāhmaṇa, kṣatriya, vaśya respectively), they should have girdles and staffs [in accordance with certain specifications]. While the teacher takes hold of (the hand of) his teacher, the latter offers (a homa of clarified butter oblations) in the fire [following certain specifications] and seats himself to the north of the fire with his face turned to the east, while the other one (the boy) stations himself in front (of the teacher) with his face turned to the west. The teacher then fills the folded hands of both himself and of the boy with water and with the verse "we choose that of Savitṛ" (Rgveda V. 82. 1) the teacher drops down the water in his own folded hands on to the water in the folded hands of the boy; having thus poured the water, he should seize with his own hand the boy's hand together with the thumb (of the boy) with the formula "by the urge (or order) of the god Savitṛ, with the arms of the two Aśvins, with the ands of Pūṣan, I seize thy hand, oh so and so"; with the words "Savitṛ has seized thy hand, oh so and so" a second time (the teacher seizes the boy's hand); with the words "Agni is thy teacher, oh so and so" a third time. The teacher should cause
(the boy) to look at the sun, while the teacher repeats "God Savitri! this is thy brāhmaṇārī, protect him, may he not die" and (the teacher should further say "Whose brāhmaṇārī art thou? thou art the brāhmaṇārī of Prāṇa. Who does initiate thee and whom (does he initiate)? I give thee to Ka (to Prajāpati)". With the half verse ([Rgveda] III. 8. 4) "the young man, well attired and dressed, came hither" he (the teacher) should cause him to turn round to the right and with his two hands placed over (the boy’s) shoulders he should touch the place of the boy’s heart repeating the latter half (of [Rgveda] III. 8. 4). Having wiped the ground round the fire the brāhmaṇārī should put (on the fire) a fuel stick silently, since it is known (from śrutis) "what belongs to Prajāpati is silently (done)", and the brāhmaṇārī belongs to Prajāpati. Some do this (offering of a fuel stick) with a mantra "to Agni I have brought a fuel stick, to the great Jātavedas; by the fuel stick mayst thou increase, Oh Agni and may we (increase) through brahman (prayer or spiritual lore), svāhā". Having put the fuel stick (on the fire) and having touched the fire, he (the student) thrice wipes off his face with the words "I anoint myself with lustre"; it is known (from śrutis) "for he does anoint himself with lustre". "May Agni bestow on me insight, offspring and lustre; on me may Indra bestow insight, offspring and vigour (indriya); on me may the sun bestow insight, offspring and radiance; what thy lustre is, Oh Agni, may I thereby become lustrous; what thy strength is, Agni, may I thereby become strong; what thy consuming power is, Agni, may I thereby acquire consuming power". Having waited upon (worshipped) Agni with these formulas, (the student) should bend his knees, embrace (the teacher’s feet) and say to him "recite, Sir, recite, Sir, the Sāvitrī". Seizing the student's hand with the upper garment (of the student) and his own hands the teacher recites the Sāvitrī, first pāda by pāda, then hemistich by hemistich (and lastly) the whole verse. He (the teacher) should make him (the student) recite (the Sāvitrī) as much as he is able. On the place of the student’s heart the teacher lays his hand with the fingers upturned with the formula "I place thy heart unto duty to me; may thy mind follow my mind; may you attend on my words single-minded; may Brhaspati appoint thee unto me". Having tied the girdle round him (the boy) and having given him the staff, the teacher should instruct him in the observances of a brāhmaṇārī with the words "a brāhmaṇārī art thou, sip water, do service, do not sleep by day, depending (completely) on the teacher learn the Veda". He (the student) should beg (food) in the evening and the morning; he should put a fuel stick (on fire) in the evening and the morning. That (which he has received by begging) he should announce to the teacher; he should not sit down (but should be standing) the rest of the day.

The lines preceding this passage remind the reader that this rite of initiation is not optional. Those who fail to undergo it before the stipulated deadline, will for all practical purposes be expelled from Brahmanical company: 408 "After that [deadline], they will be patitasāvitrika ‘deprived of the Sāvitrī’. One should not initiate them, nor teach them, nor use them as sacrificial priests, nor indeed have intercourse with them." Not all texts are so severe. The Āpastamba Dharmasūtra (1.1.28-36), for example, reserves such

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408 ĀśvGS 1.19.6-7 (ed. Gokhale): ata ārdhvaṃ patitasāvitrīkā bhavanti // 6 // nainān upanayen nādhīyāpayen na yājayen naitbhir vyavahareyuh // 7 //
exclusion for those whose father and grandfather have not been initiated, and proposes even for those penances that will allow them to be initiated after all.

It appears, then, that an upanayana rite was created at the time of the Gṛhyasūtras.\textsuperscript{409} It is also described in the early Dharmasūtras, including the presumably oldest extant one, the Āpastamba Dharmasūtra. Some elements were added later on, most notably the yajñopavīta ‘sacred thread’ and the notion of the ‘twice-born’.

In order to appreciate what has been said so far, it is important to emphasize the distinction between a rite and a custom. While it may at times be difficult to draw a precise line, so that there may be cases where it is difficult to determine whether we are dealing with a rite or with a custom, by and large the difference is clear. Ritual behaviour is behaviour that is anchored in a higher reality, with the result that it adds a solemn, or sacred, character to what is done. A ritual initiation to Vedic studies is more than just the beginning of Vedic studies, whether or not certain customs are observed. By anchoring the event in a higher reality, it transforms it into something irreversible: after the initiation, the Vedic student has become a different person, perhaps we should say: a true Brahmin. Initiations are often thought of as new births, all over the world, and the notion of a ‘twice-born’ could in due time easily attach itself to this initiation.\textsuperscript{410} The connection with the higher reality is, in the examples considered, established by the holistic character of the procedure, the use of sacred formulas, etc.\textsuperscript{411}

About the earlier, i.e. pre-ritual, history of the upanayana there are some misunderstandings that it will be useful to discuss here. We begin with some observations that Boris Oguiénine makes in his book \textit{Three Studies in Vedic and Indo-European Religion and Linguistics} (1990: 1 f.):

The Upanishads mention some undoubtedly very ancient forms of the upanayana which are most bare as they are deprived of any solemnity and bear no traces of ritual ceremonies. They strikingly ignore any involvement of the gods during the young man’s investiture. [The Chāndogya Upaniṣad] and [the Brhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad] which are the oldest sources available after the Śamhitā period hint at the upanayana being limited to the approaching a teacher by a future brahmačārin only with words: [Brhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad] VI.2.7 reports that Gautama (alias Uddalaka Āruṇi, famous for his philosophical dialogues in [Chāndogya Upaniṣad] VI.2), although having a son Śvetaketu, approaches Pravāhana Jaivali with a simple announcement: "I am coming to you". This statement apparently sufficed to a[ls]certain his intention to become the latter’s pupil. The comments incorporated in the Brhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad itself are most eloquent: we learn that in the ancient times those who were to become brahmačārins used to say just these words: VI.2.7 sa hopāyanakīrtovāsa "having mentioned his coming to him (as a pupil), he (Gautama) stayed (with him)".

\textsuperscript{409} Sundareswaran (2015) argues “that the upanayana ritual drew much from the sacrificial investiture ceremony of dīkṣā in its earliest stages” (p. 207).

\textsuperscript{410} Lubin (2010), in a section called "Consecration as rebirth", draws attention to a passage from the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa (11.5) that present the student as newly born. Contentwise this passage does not reveal whether it dates from a time before or after the introduction of a rite of initiation.

\textsuperscript{411} On the distinctive nature of ritual, see Bronkhorst 2012, esp. § III; 2012c: § I 3
The simplicity of procedure does not surprise us after our earlier reflections. The incorporated comments to the extent that this was the procedure in ancient times need special attention, and we will return to them below.

On p. 2 of the same publication Oguibénine states:

It is easy to infer thus that, at the early stage at least, the brahmacārin’s education remained a matter of learned discussions between the father and the son or else, if ever these were deemed insufficient, between a teacher and a young man.

This inference is based on three Upaniṣadic passages that will be discussed below.

Similar observations are made by P. V. Kane (HistDh II/I p. 273):

... in the [Brhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad] VI.2.7 it is said that former students (i.e. students in former ages) approached the teacher (for brahmacarya) only in words (i.e. without any further solemn rite or ceremony). In the most ancient times it is probable that the father himself always taught his son.

And by Raj Bali Pandey (1969: 125):

In early times, in the Brahman families, it was the father who taught the boy.

In what follows I will first analyze some passages (including Brhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad 6.2.7) that supposedly inform about the procedure of becoming a Vedic student. Next we will consider the evidence underlying the claim that originally fathers always taught their sons. And finally we will look at the implications of the incorporated comments that attribute this particular procedure to ancient times.

Brhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad 6.2 tells the story of the encounter between Śvetaketu and King Jaivali Pravāhaṇa of the Paṇcālas. The king asks Śvetaketu a number of questions, which the latter is unable to answer. Obviously embarrassed, Śvetaketu returns to his father, who had also been his teacher, and reports what has happened. The father, who too must admit his inability to answer these questions, decides to become pupil of Pravāhaṇa Jaivali; the term used for studenthood is brahmacarya (BĀrUp 6.2.4). The king accepts the father, here called Gautama, as pupil on condition that he "seek in the usual manner". Then the Upaniṣad continues:

"I come to you, sir, as a pupil!" — only by means of words, verily, men of yore came as pupils. — So with the acknowledgment of coming as a pupil he remained.

The phrase "only by means of words, verily, men of yore came as pupils" shows that this custom existed no longer at the time of redaction of this passage. Why was it inserted?

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412 BĀrUp 6.2.7: sa vai gautama tīrthenecchās īti; tr. Hume.
413 BĀrUp 6.2.7: upayanti aham bhavantam īti/ vācā ha smaiva pūrva upayanti/ sa hopayanyakārtvavad. Tr. Hume, modified.
414 This translation for vācā ha smaiva is in agreement with the use of these particles; see Hartman 1966: 82: "This position [of ha] near the opening of a new passage is likely to draw attention to the first word of a paragraph or sentence". ChāṇU 4.10.1 taṁ ha smaiva na samāvartayati has the same particles in the same order, and must be translated: "only him, verily, he did not allow to return".
Did its author really know what had been customary in the past? Or did he perhaps have other reasons for believing that men of yore became pupils by means of words only?

A comparison with the parallel passage in the Chāndogya Upaniṣad (5.3 f.) shows that he may very well have had such other reasons. This passage tells essentially the same story as Brhadāranyaka Upaniṣad 6.2, with the same characters playing the same roles. But here, unlike in Brhadāranyaka Upaniṣad 6.2, Śvetaketu’s father does not become a pupil of Pravāhana Jaivali in the technical sense of the term. He just asks the king to explain the questions he had asked Śvetaketu, and the king, after some hesitation, complies.147

There is a third Upaniṣadic story about Śvetaketu and his father, this one occurring in the Kauṣitaki Upaniṣad (1.1 f.). This story has a number of features in common with the story of Brhadāranyaka Upaniṣad 6.2 and Chāndogya Upaniṣad 5.3 f. This time it is Citra Gārgyāyini / Gāngyāyani who poses an embarrassing question to Śvetaketu, with the ultimate result that Śvetaketu’s father enters upon a course of study (svādhyāya) in the house of Citra. In this case, however, Śvetaketu’s father approaches his future teacher "with fuel in his hand" (samitpāṇi). This expression is common in the Brāhmaṇas and Upaniṣads to describe the process by which someone becomes someone else’s pupil.148 The fact that it occurs in connection with Śvetaketu’s father contradicts the idea that in his days this kind of approach of a teacher was as yet unknown, purportedly because pupils approached their teachers by means of words only. (I shall argue below that it is in any case not justified to read these stories as accounts of historical events.) If R. Söhn (1981: 199, 212) is right in believing that the Kauṣitaki Upaniṣad version of the story, at least as far as the introductory narrative is concerned "must have been the oldest one and probably the source of the two other versions",149 obviously any conclusion as to an early upanayana by words alone is deprived of its basis.

Let us pay some more attention to the two versions of the above story in the Chāndogya and Brhadāranyaka Upaniṣads. Since they are two versions of one and the same story, there must have been an earlier version from which both were derived.150

415 Söhn (1981: 195) states, with regard to this phrase: "vermutlich als Gloss eines späteren Überlieferers anzusehen". It seems safer to speak here rather of the work of the/a redactor.

416 This is by no means the only instance of a Sanskrit text wrongly attributing some custom or practice to the past. For another instance see Schmidt 1987: 25 f. (upanayana for girls). See also the next note.

417 A similar editorial observation about earlier customs is found at ŚPaBr 11.4.1.1: "for in the time of our forefathers a prize used to be offered by chosen priests when driving about, for the sake of calling out the timid to a disputa-" (ie|ad dha sma vai tat pūrveśāṃ vṛtān dhāvayatām ekadhanam upāhitam bhavaty upavatāhāyā bibhyatā[m]; tr. Witzel 1987a: 371). No such remark occurs in the parallel passage GPA|Br 1.3.6. The editorial remark finds its explanation in the fact that here one gold coin plays the role which elsewhere in Vedic literature is played by large numbers of cows, horses, etc.; see Witzel 1987a: 366 n. 11, and recall the remarks about gold coins made in § 1.2.2, above.

418 See Kane, HistDh II/I p. 273. Examples: ŚPaBr 11.4.1.9; 11.5.3.13; but GPA|Br 1.3.14: /ulpayāṃi tu eva bhavantam (Witzel 1987a: 368); BĀrUp 2.1.14. Note that the KauṣUp version allows of an interpretation in which Citra does not insist that Śvetaketu’s father become his pupil; see Söhn 1981: 183 n. 19; Renou 1978: 15 n. 22.

419 See however the next note.

420 In view of the fact that the story may have been handed down orally before (and perhaps after) it became incorporated in the two Upaniṣads, I will not address the question whether perhaps either of the two surviving versions is the direct source of the other one. Even if we accept
There is reason to believe that this earlier version made no explicit mention of Śvetaketu's father becoming pupil of Jaivali Pravāhana ‘in the usual manner’, just as we find it in the Chāndogya Upaniṣad. Had it been different, it would be hard to explain how this important feature could have been lost in the Chāndogya Upaniṣad. If, on the other hand, we assume that in the earlier version Śvetaketu's father did not become pupil of the king, the remarks we find in Brhadāranyaka Upaniṣad 6.2.7 become understandable, too. The redactor of this passage, we are then led to believe, was puzzled by the lack of appropriate ritual ceremonies in a situation which he interpreted as a form of upanayana. He ‘explained’ this puzzling state of affairs by stating that in former times no such ceremonies were performed.

There are other reasons, too, for assuming that the Chāndogya version is, in at least certain respects, closer to the original. Both surviving versions begin with a number of questions, the questions namely which Śvetaketu is unable to answer. But only in the Chāndogya Upaniṣad the instruction by Pravāhana Jaivali is more or less directly connected with these initial questions. In the Brhadāranyaka Upaniṣad the link is no longer obvious, so that we are led to believe that the Brhadāranyaka Upaniṣad version has lost some of the original coherence.

Also the mention of Gautama's studentship in the Brhadāranyaka Upaniṣad version does not fit easily, for the king had offered him a boon. In the Chāndogya Upaniṣad version the situation is straightforward: Gautama asks as boon to hear the words which Pravāhana had spoken to his son, and receives it, be it after some hesitation on the part of the king.\(^{421}\) In the Brhadāranyaka Upaniṣad, on the other hand, the boon is subjected to the subsequent condition that Gautama accept the status of pupil. But normally no special boon is necessary for becoming someone's pupil. If we assume that the original story made only mention of a boon, as indeed the Chāndogya Upaniṣad version does, this peculiarity is solved, too.\(^{422}\)

If, then, we accept that the redactor of Brhadāranyaka Upaniṣad 6.2.7 thought that something was missing in the text he received, what exactly was it? We have seen that in parallel passages in the Brāhmaṇas and Upaniṣads aspiring students are normally depicted as bringing samidh ‘fuel’ for the sacred fire. But Gautama approached King Pravāhana without bringing fuel; here the two versions of the story agree. For the redactor of Brhadāranyaka Upaniṣad 6.2.7 this was, as it appears, incongruous, so that he added the remark that in former times one could become student by means of words only, i.e., without bringing fuel for the sacred fire.

The redactor of the Chāndogya Upaniṣad version, on the other hand, does not appear to have taken offence at the fact that Gautama interrogated the king without

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Söhnen's position that the story in the Kauśītaki Upaniṣad may have been the source of the two other versions, the many close similarities between Brhadāranyaka Upaniṣad and Chāndogya Upaniṣad show that there must have been a common ancestor of the Brhadāranyaka and Chāndogya versions which was already quite different from the Kauśītaki version. Söhnen (1981: 200) is of the opinion that "[d]er Verfasser der [Brhadāranyaka Upaniṣad]-Fassung ... offenbar die [Chāndogya Upaniṣad]-Fassung als Vorlage benutzt ... hat". Here, as in her view as to the position of the Kauśītaki version, she may not sufficiently take into account that these stories may have been handed down orally, and that the composers of our texts did not necessarily base themselves on written or otherwise fixed texts.

\(^{421}\) Interestingly, both passages confuse, or identify, the words spoken to Śvetaketu, i.e., the questions asked, and the answers to those questions.

\(^{422}\) See also Söhnen 1981: 200.
becoming his student. This finds unexpected confirmation in the immediately following story in the Chāndogya Upaniṣad (5.11 ff.). There we read how six Brahmins — one of them being Uddālaka Āruni, presumably the same as Gautama, the father of Śvetaketu — approached King Aśvapati Kaikeya "with fuel in their hands" (samitpāṇi), apparently with the desire to become his students. The king, however, starts his teaching without having accepted them as students (anupaniya; ChānUp 5.11.7). One is tempted to believe that, in the opinion of the redactor of Chāndogya Upaniṣad 5 (supposing there was only one for these two stories), there was no problem connected with an instruction by a Kṣatriya of Brahmins in which the latter do not formally become pupils of the former.

The exact significance of the expression anupaniya "without having accepted them as students" becomes clear by comparing Chāndogya Upaniṣad 5.11 ff. with the alternative version of this story at Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa 10.6.1. There Aśvapati Kaikeya does accept the Brahmins as pupils. This is described in the following terms:424

... they came again to him, with fuel in their hands, saying: "We want to become thy pupils." ... He said: "... put your fuel on [the fire], ye are become my pupils."

This simple ceremony was apparently denied the Brahmins in the Chāndogya version of the story.

What these stories suggest is that there was no formal procedure for becoming someone's pupil. However, the redactor of the Brhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad found this surprising, and this is most easily explained by assuming that he lived at a time when the upanayana had been formalized, that is to say, when it had become a ritual.

We can formulate this the other way round. The upanayana rite was created before the editorial addition in Brhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad 6.2.7, i.e., before the final redaction of that text. I have argued elsewhere that Patañjali still knew a portion of that Upaniṣad as an independent text.425 The final redaction may therefore be more recent than Patañjali and therefore belong to the first century BCE at the earliest.

Given that crucial notions such as yajnopaviṇa and dvija are still unknown to Patañjali's Mahābhāṣya and the Āpastamba Dharmasūtra, it seems only reasonable to think that this ritual was created late, not long before these texts.

We still have to deal with the other claim of Oguiénine and Kane, viz., that originally "the brahmacārin's education remained a matter of learned discussions between the father and the son".

All the three passages considered above admittedly mention a pupil who has been initially instructed by his father. But in all three cases the pupil is the same person, viz., Śvetaketu, the son of Gautama. Together they constitute, at most, one single case. And the value of this single case depends, again, on the amount of information the authors of these passages can be believed to have possessed about "the time of Śvetaketu".

423 Kane (HistDh II/I p. 273) translates anupaniya as "without submitting them to the rites of Upananaya". This is an interpretation based on the retro-projection of more recent ideas. See below.
424 SPaBr 10.6.1.2-3: ... te ha ... samitpāṇayah praticakramira upa tvāyāmeti/ ... sa hovāca ... [a]bhyādhatta samidha upetā stheti/. Tr. Eggeling.
425 Greater Magadha § III.4 (The Yājñavalkya-Kāṇḍa)
Another passage in the Chāndogya Upaniṣad shows that the authors of the early Upaniṣads were not all that well informed about the time of Śvetaketu. Or rather, it provides completely different information about this person. It tells us that Śvetaketu was initially not educated by his father.  

Now, there was Śvetaketu Āruṇeya. To him his father said: "Śvetaketu, live the life of a student of sacred knowledge (brahmacarya). Verily, my dear, from our family there is no one unlearned [in the Vedas], a Brahmin by connection, as it were." He, then, having become a pupil at the age of twelve, having studied all the Vedas, returned at the age of twenty-four, conceited, thinking himself learned, proud. Then his father said to him: "Śvetaketu, my dear, since now you are conceited, think yourself learned, and are proud, did you also ask for that teaching whereby what has not been heard of becomes heard of, what has not been thought of becomes thought of, what has not been understood becomes understood?" "How, pray, sir, is that teaching?"

According to this passage, Śvetaketu received first twelve years of education from someone different from his father. During these twelve years he studied "all the Vedas", which is certainly not the same as engaging in learned discussions. His father does not come into the picture as a teacher until after the completion of these twelve years, and that because Śvetaketu is still not able to answer some important questions.

It would be a mistake to try to read the above four passages about Śvetaketu and his father as descriptions of historical events. It is more promising to notice that they share an important feature. In each of them Śvetaketu is presented as someone who has received an excellent education but is, in spite of this, not able to answer some essential questions. That is to say, all of them ridicule, in the figure of Śvetaketu, the claims of traditional learning.

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426 ChānUp 6.1.1-3; śvetaketur hā’runeya āśa/ taṃ ha pitovāca: śvetaketo vasa brahmacyram/ na vai somyāsmatkulino ’nanūcyā brahmabandhur iva bhavatīti/ sa ha dvādaśavarṣa upetya caturvimsatīvarṣaḥ sarvān vedān adhiṭṭha mahāmanā anūcānāṃ nā stābha eyāya/ taṃ ha pitovācā/ śvetaketo yan nu somyeda mahāmanā anūcānāṃ nā stābho ’śī/ ita tam ādēśam aprākṣyāh, yenāśrutam śrutam bhavaty amatam amatā aprījñānam vijarjaitām iti/ katham nu bhagavah sa ādēśo bhavatīti// Tr. Hume, modified.

427 So Söhnlein 1981: 179. Ogui'bène (190: 2) remarks: "It is noticeable that after Śvetaketu's twelve years' studying with Prāvana, it is again his father who has to perfect his son's science about the nature of the ātman (Ch. Up. VI. 1-16)." This is pure fantasy. Not only does ChānUp 6.1-16 not mention the name of Prāvana, there is no indication anywhere in Vedic literature that Śvetaketu ever was Prāvana's pupil. In the passages studied above it was Śvetaketu's father who became Prāvana's pupil. Ogui'bène (1.c.) states, with reference to BĀrUp 6.2: "... as soon as Uddālaka realizes that no one of the five questions asked by Prāvana have been fitly answered by Śvetaketu, it is decided that both the father and the son will stay as brahmacārins with Prāvana." This is incorrect. BĀrUp 6.2.4 leaves no doubt that only the father takes up studentship: "[Gautama, i.e., the father,] said: ‘... But come! Let us go there and take studentship.’ ‘Go yourself, sir.’ So Gautama went forth to where [the place] of Prāvana Jaivali was.” (sa hovāca: ... prehi tu tatra praṇitisvam vatsyāva iti/ bhavān eva gacchatv iti/ sa ājagāma gautamo yatram pravāhānasya jaivaler āśa/ tr. Hume.) Also the Vedic Index of Names and Subjects contains the same mistake, stating (Macdonell and Keith 1912: II: 409 s.v. Śvetaketu Āruneya): "He (i.e. Śvetaketu, JB) was a contemporary of, and was instructed by the Pañcāla king Pravāhana Jaivala (sic)".
But why is Śvetaketu's father, in three of the four passages considered, presented as his son's first teacher? Here it is first to be noted that in all these three passages Śvetaketu's father, too, is presented as someone incapable of answering the questions that puzzle his son. In fact, it is the father who is going to receive instruction, twice from Jāvali Prāvāhaṇa, once from Citra Gārgyāyani. If, therefore, these passages ridicule Śvetaketu, they also ridicule his father.\(^{428}\)

It seems clear, then, that Śvetaketu was remembered, at the time of composition of these stories, as an exponent of Vedic learning, and was used as target by those who felt critical towards this type of learning. It seems ill-advised to look upon these tendentious stories as true descriptions of historical events.

Śvetaketu's renown as a Veda scholar is confirmed by other texts, which, unlike the above Upaniṣadic passages, do not ridicule him for this reason. The Āpastamba Dharmasūtra mentions him twice. The first passage reads: \(^{429}\)

Seers (ṛṣi) are not born among the modern people (āvara), because the rules of restraint are transgressed. Some, however, become seers on account of their knowledge of the scriptures (śrutasṛṣi) in a new birth, due to a residue of the fruits of their [former] actions; an example is Śvetaketu.

The second passage is the following: \(^{430}\)

Śvetaketu says: "one who wishes to study more scriptures after he has founded a household should live with devoted [mind] in the family of a teacher for two months every year; for in this way I studied more of the scriptures than in the preceding time".

Śvetaketu's opinions, mainly on details of ritual and its interpretation, are also recorded in a number of Vedic passages: KauśBr 26.4; ŚPaBr 3.4.3.13; 4.2.5.15; 11.2.7.12; 5.4.18; ŚPaBrK 4.4.3.11; 5.3.1.12. He is here described as the son of Uddālaka (auddālakī; ŚPaBr 3.4.3.13; 4.2.5.15; ŚPaBrK 4.4.3.11; 5.3.1.12), or as the grandson of Aruṇā (āruneya; ŚPaBr 11.2.7.12; 5.4.18).

It seems safe to conclude that Śvetaketu was remembered for his Vedic learning. When later the need was felt, within the Brahmānical tradition, to criticize Vedic learning, or to point to its limitations, this was done in the form of stories in which Śvetaketu was unable to answer some important questions.

There is no reason to doubt (nor proof, to be sure) that the opinions and quotations directly ascribed to Śvetaketu did indeed, in this or similar form, belong to a historical

\(^{428}\) Uddālaka appears to be ridiculed in his own right at ChāṇUp 5.11 ff.; cp. also Witzel 1987a: 368 n. 14. (Not in the parallel version ŚPaBr 10.6.1, where Uddālaka's father, Aruṇā Aupaveṣī, figures, but is not singled out for ridicule.) Note that the same characters are made fun of outside Brahmānical literature, too. Śvetaketu (Pāli Setaketu) is ridiculed in the Buddhist Setaketu Jātaka (no. 377), Uddālaka in the Uddālaka Jātaka (no. 487), the gāthās of which may be non-Buddhistic (Lüders 1914).

\(^{429}\) ĀpDhS 1.2.5.4-5: ... ṛṣaya ‘vareṣu na jāyante niyāmātikramāt/ śrutāsrayas tu bhavanti kecit karmaphalāśeṣaṇa punahsambhavaḥ; yathā śvetaketuh/

\(^{430}\) ĀpDhS 1.4.13.19-20: niveṣe vṛtte samvatsare samvatsare dvau dvau māsau samāhita ācāryakule vased bhūyaḥ śrutam icchān iti śvetaketuh/ etena hy aham yogena bhūyaḥ pūrvasmāt kālāc chrutam akurviṣu/
person of that name. This raises the question whether the texts that mention these opinions or contain such quotations, are for that reason closer in time to Śvetaketu, and therefore older, than the texts that tell the stories in which Śvetaketu is embarrassed.

This is not necessarily always the case. It is conceivable that the words and opinions of Śvetaketu were still faithfully preserved by some at a time when he had become a legendary figure for others. It is none-the-less noteworthy that the Āpastamba Dharmasūtra, in the first passage cited above, explicitly calls Śvetaketu a modern (avara) seer. This is all the more noteworthy in that the Brhadāranyaka Upaniṣad, as we have seen, considered him one of the people of yore (pārva).

The characterization of Śvetaketu as ‘modern’ in the Āpastamba Dharmasūtra has puzzled scholars for more than a century. Eggeling (1882: xli) commented that "Āpastamba, by this remark, pays no very great compliment to the inspired texts of his own school, since Aruṇa Aupaveṣi, the grandfather of Śvetaketu Āruṇeya, is twice referred to in the Taittirīya-samhitā". What Eggeling fails to say, is that Aruṇa Aupaveṣi is twice referred to in a brāhmaṇa portion of the Taittirīya Śamhitā (6.1.9.2; 4.5.1). Yet these brāhmaṇa portions, as I have argued elsewhere, may be considerably younger than the mantras, and may not yet have been known to Pāṇini.431

It follows from the above that the Upaniṣad passages considered do not support the view that at any period of time the father always taught the son. At best they show that there was a time when it was customary for a pupil to approach his future teacher "with fuel in his hand" (samitpāṇi).

But approaching a teacher is not the same as undergoing an initiation! And showing that Vedic instruction has roots that go back to a remote past is not the same as showing that one could only gain entrance to this instruction by means of a ritual. Indeed, initiation is a rite, a śaṃskāra, whereas approaching a teacher is not.432 And as we have seen, the rite of initiation was a relatively new invention, introduced, it would seem, during the final centuries preceding the Common Era.

There is no need to say much about the other sacraments. They have been sufficiently studied by others,433 and merely confirm the great concern of Brahmīns to live sacred lives, different from all others. Time and again it becomes clear that in most if not all of these cases we witness a custom that becomes a rite, either in the Gṛhyasūtras or even later. That is to say, we witness the creation of rites during the period that occupies us, the final centuries preceding the Common Era.

By way of example we may consider what Raj Bali Pandey says about the rite of name-giving (Pandey 1969: 79):

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431 Greater Magadha p. 193. Note further that both the Chāndogya Upaniṣad (2.23.1) and the Āpastamba Dharmasūtra, and no other texts, present the same fourfold classification of virtuous ways of life. This identical classification —studied elsewhere (Bronkhorst 1993b: 11-16) — suggests once more that these two texts, or portions of texts, were not far removed from each other in time. See further Bronkhorst 1989d.

432 Cp. Kane (HistDh II/I p. 268-269): "The word ‘upanayana’ can be derived and explained in two ways: (1) taking (the boy) near the ācārya, (2) that rite by which the boy is taken to the ācārya. The first sense appears to have been the original one and when an extensive ritual came to be associated with upanayana the second came to be the sense of the word. Such an ancient work as the [Āpastamba Dharmasūtra] I.1.1.19 says that upanayana is a śaṃskāra (purificatory rite) ...

From the study of the Brāhmaṇas it is evident that there was a system of naming in the pre-Sūtra period. But we do not precisely know what ceremonies were associated with it. Even the Grhyasūtras, except the Gobhila, do not quote Vedic verses to be recited on this occasion, though they lay down rules for the composition of the name. It seems that the Nāmakaraṇa was more a custom than a ceremony in the beginning. But being the occasion of a great social importance, it was later on included in the Saṃskāras.

Here, as elsewhere, the sacraments appear to be relatively late creations, dating at the earliest to the period in which Brahmanism was reinventing itself.

IIA.2.2. Vedic knowledge

Our discussion of the upanayana has already made clear that knowledge of the Veda was of central importance for Brahmmins. Vedic learning, for at least certain Brahmmins, went well beyond the recitation of the Sāvitrī mantra that we encountered in connection with the upanayana. Reciting whole Vedas — or at least major chunks of it — goes back to early times, and we owe it no doubt to this custom that so much of Vedic literature has been preserved. This tradition of recitation is unique and, as long as it functions well, not in need of written texts. Indeed, the Vedic tradition has always looked down upon written texts, especially written versions of the Veda. There are good reasons to believe that the oral preservation of at least certain Vedic text has been perfect. This applies most particularly to the Rgveda.

It is yet clear that during the final centuries preceding the Common Era extra efforts were made to secure the correct transmission of the Vedic texts. This found expression in the composition of texts that concentrate on phonology, in the first place Prātiśākhya and Śikṣās. There is no need to say more about these here (see § I.2.6, above), even though they play some role in our discussion of Brahmanical ideas about language in Part IIB, below.

Vedic knowledge was and remained central to Brahmanism. Dharma came to be looked upon as based upon the Veda — an idea shared by all surviving texts on Dharma with the possible exception of the Āpastamba Dharmasūra. Olivelle (2012) has argued that this idea must have gained currency after Kātyāyana and Patañjali. There is no need to go into details here.

Vedic knowledge came to play a central role in certain theoretical developments linked to Brahmanism. The belief that Vedic mantras could be used to bring about effects in the world gave rise to theoretical developments that will be studied in § IIA.4.

IIA.2.3. The ideal Brahmin

Purity of life was and remained a central concern for Brahmmins, as is clear from the extensive literature on Dharma that developed around it. It is beyond the scope of this study to give a survey of this literature, or even of the most important rules it
contained.\textsuperscript{434} Here we may recall that the literature on Dharma was still in its formative stage at the time of Patañjali, though not without at least some predecessors before Kātyāyana.\textsuperscript{435}

Ritual purity implies separation from human society at large. And indeed, literature provides us with evidence to show that the ideal Brahmical life is lived away from society, without contact with the rest of the world. Clearly this could only remain an ideal for most Brahmins, for they could not \textit{en masse} retire to the forest. However, the ideal exerted an influence — and continued to exert and influence — on the way of life of at least certain exemplary Brahmins, and on literary and artistic stereotypes. As we have seen, there are good reasons to think that Alexander already had come across a number of Brahmins who were trying to live more or less closely in accordance with this ideal.

In para-Vedic literature the ideal of living a life independent of society finds expression in a figure who came to be called \textit{vānaprastha} ‘forest-dweller’. In certain early texts it is the way of life of certain householders, which shows that in origin the life of the forest-dweller has nothing to do with the four āśramas (options or stages of life) to which it came to be assigned. This way of life, and the ascetic practices that accompany it, have been discussed in \textit{Greater Magadha} (§ IIA.1; pp. 79 ff.). The literary theme of the Brahmical hermitage in the forest, also called āśrama, and corresponding to the real life agrahāras that were put at their disposition by generous donors, has been analyzed in \textit{Buddhism in the Shadow of Brahmanism} (§ 2.4; pp. 74 ff.). The āśrama as hermitage is part of Brahmical self-representation, because its inhabitants dwell there in glorious independence, dedicating themselves to ritual activities. The agrahāra, by its very existence, reveals Brahmical dependence on the powers that be, and does not fit in easily into Brahmical self-representation. Agrahāras, therefore, are rarely mentioned in Brahmical literature, and all the more in inscriptions commissioned by donors who did not wish to miss this opportunity of glory for themselves. Since, then, these Brahmical institutions have already been dealt with elsewhere, we can turn our attention to some features that have not so far been commented upon.

What strikes in descriptions of Vedic forest-dwellers is that they are all engaged in ritual activity, in their remote huts or hermitages. Ritual activity is also expected from the recipients of an agrahāra, as we have seen. Given that Brahmanism sees itself as continuing the Vedic tradition, this is at first sight bizarre. Brahmins used to carry out sacrifices for others, preferably rulers, and were rewarded for doing so. The distinction between officiant and sacrificer (yajamāna) was as clear as daylight: the typical sacrificer \textit{could} not sacrifice on his own, and the officiant \textit{would} not sacrifice on his own behalf. Rulers, who ideally were Kṣatriyas and not Brahmins, were not entitled to perform their own sacrifices, and sacrificial priests, who had to be Brahmins, did this for them.

All this changed during the period under consideration. And it did not only change for forest-dwellers. Individual rites — the so-called grhya- or domestic rites — make their appearance, and we have already considered (in § I.2.4, above) the indications that suggest that the relevant texts, the Grhyasūtras, started being produced in our period. Domestic rites are private rites, carried out by the sacrificer himself. In these texts there


\textsuperscript{435} See § I.2.2, above.
is normally no distinction between sacrificer and officiant. The development that led to
this is remarkable, and deserves our attention.

One scholar who has drawn attention to the phenomenon of Vedic sacrifices
without officiants is J. C. Heesterman, who speaks in this connection of the
interiorization of the sacrifice. In Heesterman’s article “Brahmin, ritual, and renouncer”,
first published in 1964, and reprinted in 1985 in The Inner Conflict of Tradition (pp. 26-
44), he finds in the Vedic ritual a development toward ever decreasing involvement with
others. The pre-classical sacrifice, he claims, involved rivalry between different parties.
This ‘agonistic cooperation’ has disappeared in the classical sacrifice, where only one
institutor of the sacrifice (yajamāna) remains. This yajamāna, however, is still dependent
on his officiants. The next step, therefore, would be in the direction of discarding the
theory, set off by the individualization of the ritual, did not stop at the point where the
host-guest, protagonist-antagonist complementarity was fused into the single unit of
yajamāna and officiants. It had to advance to its logical conclusion, that is, the
interiorization of the ritual, which makes the officiants’ services superfluous”. With the
interiorization of the ritual, Heesterman thinks, “we touch the principle of world
renunciation, the emergence of which has been of crucial importance in the development
of Indian thinking”.

The notion of a pre-classical sacrifice with ‘agonistic cooperation’ is not based on
any evidence at all. The real explanation for this remarkable development of the Vedic
sacrifice, I propose, is as follows. The Vedic sacrifice essentially depended on powerful
and rich sponsors. During the period we are considering, these sponsors became rare or
disappeared altogether. Brahmins might have dropped their sacrificial tradition, but they
didn’t. Rather they developed individual rites that Brahmins could carry out on their own,
and that became part of Brahmical self-representation. Indeed, sacrificing for someone
else came to be looked upon as inferior. This will be clear from the following passage
from the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa (9.5.2.12-13): 437

now who performs these [rites] for another, he causes these oceans [the rites] to
dry up [for himself]; those dried up, his meters are dried up; after the meters, the
world (loka); after the world, the body (ātman); after the body, [his] children and
cattle. Indeed he becomes poorer (pāpiyas) daily, who performs these rites for
another. ... now who does not perform these [rites] for another becomes more
prosperous (śreyas) daily. Indeed this [rite] is his divine, undying, body (ātman);
who performs these [rites] for another gives his divine body to another. Only a
dried trunk remains.

If you leave a Brahmin to himself, not only will he interact as little as possible with
society, he will engage in rites for whose performance he does not need anyone else. The
Brahmanical sage in his hermitage passes his time performing sacrificial rites, so much
so that smoke is a constant feature of a hermitage. 438

It is in these circumstances that the classical sattra has its place. The sattra as
described in relatively late Vedic and para-Vedic literature is a long sacrificial session

438 See the first act of Kālidāsa’s Abhijñānaśākuntala.
with a number of officiants, but without sacrificer (yajamāna). Falk (1985: 275) sums up the main features of the classical sattra in the following four points:\footnote{439}

1. Only Brahmins can participate. (Als Teilnehmer kommen nur Brahmanen in Betracht.)
2. There is no sacrificer. One of the participants assumes the role of yajamāna whenever in the ekāha-paradigm the sacrificer has to act. In spite of this special function, all the results of the sacrifice devolve upon all the participants. (Es fehlt der klassische Opferherr. Einer der brahmanischen Opferer übernimmt die Rolle des Yajamāna immer dann, wenn nach dem ekāha-Paradigma der Opferherr tätig werden muß. Trotz dieser Sonderrolle fallen aber alle Früchte des Opfers allen Teilnehmern gemeinsam zu.)
3. Since there is no sacrificer who orders the sacrifice, there is no dakṣinā either. (Da der beauftragende Opferherr fehlt, gibt es auch keine Dakṣinā.)
4. The basic form of the sattra is the dvādaśāha. (Grundform des Sattras ist der Dvādaśāha.)\footnote{440}

Falk then argues on the basis of other Vedic passages that the original sattra was not like this, but for our present purposes the origin of the sattra-sacrifice has no particular interest.\footnote{441} It is the classical form that interests us. The classical sattra is presumably performed for the benefit of the officiants, but this raises the inevitable question what these officiants lived on. To quote Caland & Henry (1906: X): "On pourrait dès lors se demander, non pas quel intérêt ils [les officiants/sacrifiants du sattra] avaient à le célébrer, — car il serait irrévérencieux de les croire incapables d'une foi sincère et d'une piété qui se suffit à elle-même, — mais du moins de quoi vivaient ces hommes, qui, absorbés tous les jours dans les pratiques d'une dévotion minutieuse et pénible, n'avaient sûrement pas le loisir de se créer des ressources par ailleurs. Mais tout indique que les sattras étaient des exercices purement sacerdotaux, comme ceux de nos communautés monastiques, accomplis par des collèges de prêtres, que rentaient de riches monarques ou seigneurs, en récompense de la bénédiction qu'appelaient sur leurs armes leur leur domaine les prières ainsi récitées chaque jour et graduées suivant le cours de l’année."

Caland and Henry, no doubt correctly, extract from the texts what they do not tell us: that powerful and/or rich sponsors were required to make the performance of a sattra possible. The sattra is therefore not only an instance of the so-called interiorization of the sacrifice, of a wish to do without a sacrificer. It is also testimony of changed sacrificial surroundings. No longer was sacrificial ritual part of a primary religion, inseparable from the state, as it presumably had been.\footnote{442} In the new situations Brahmins would be happy to receive enough support — preferably in the form of an agrahāra — to do their own things. The sattra is one of these ‘own things’. It is part of the ritual activity that Brahmins engage in on their own, but which yet inspires confidence in their sponsors.

\footnote{439}{On sattras in the Mahābhārata, see also Narsalay 2015: 101-109.}
\footnote{440}{Falk refers to two dictionaries of Vedic ritual (Renou 1954: 156; Sen 1978: 115; one might add Mylius 1995: 129); Hillebrandt 1897: 154 ff.; Keith 1925: II: 349-352; Kane, HistDh II/II pp. 1239-1246.}
\footnote{441}{But see § I.1.4, above.}
\footnote{442}{See Buddhism in the Shadow of Brahmanism, § 2.1, pp. 27 ff.}
And yet, it should be kept in mind that the desire to step outside society, outside the obligation of giving and receiving, also finds expression in the classical sattrā. In the article mentioned earlier, Heesterman (1964: p. 38 of the reprint) expresses this as follows:

the highest place in the hierarchy of sacrifices is taken up by the sacrifice ‘without dakṣinā’, according to Gopatha Brāhmaṇa 1.5.7. Such sacrifices are the sattrās of the classical ritual. In the sattrā only Brahmins participate. They unite their sacrificial fires and thus are actually assimilated with each other and are fused into one single unit. Each of them is at the same time yajamāna and officiant, and consequently, dakṣinās are neither given nor received. It is clear, however, that in this way the Brahmin and his ritual were limited to the point where they shut themselves out from the wider community.

It seems clear that the classical sattrā has its place in the process where Brahmins had lost, or were losing, their positions as priests in a primary religion, and were reinventing themselves, mainly by turning inward.

Michael Willis, in his book The Archaeology of Hindu Ritual (2009), states (p. 104):

In the old ritual literature, sattrā referred to a long sacrificial session, normally one performed by priests for their own benefit and thus without a yajamāna. Epigraphic evidence for this kind of performance is furnished by a mid-second-century inscription from Mathurā that commemorates a sattrā lasting twelve days.\(^443\) Later inscriptions, in substantial contrast, use the word sattrā to designate an institution for the feeding of ascetics and needy people, something epigraphers have explained as a ‘charitable almshouse.’\(^444\)

One wonders how substantial the contrast between earlier and later sattrā really is. In a sense, presumably all sattrās were ways of extracting donations from sponsors, whatever the texts say about it. Granted that important changes may have affected the sattrā over time, it is no surprise that inscriptions present this institution differently from the texts. We have seen that the āśrama of literature corresponds by and large to the agrahāra of the inscriptions: essentially a single institution looks altogether different from the points of view of the recipients and the donors respectively. Something similar may have

\(^443\) Willis adds the following note: “Lüders, Mathurā Inscriptions, 126 (lines 5-6) māṇacchandogena iṣṭ[v]a sattre[n]a dvā[ṛ]aśar[a]trenā yāpah pratisthā[p]jītaḥ (i.e., ‘Māṇacchandoga [a Māṇa of the Sāmveda?], having performed a sattrā lasting twelve days, has set up this sacrificial post’). The record is dated year [1*]24 in the reign of Vasīśka. As the Kuśāna era began in Spring 127, this dates CE 251, see Falk, ‘The Yuga of Sphujidhvaṇa and the Era of the Kuśāṇas,’ Silk Road Art and Archaeology 7 (2001): 121-36. For the position of Vāsiśka, see J. Cribb, ‘Early Indian History,’ in Buddhist Reliquaries from Ancient India, edited by M. Willis (London, 2000): 48.”

\(^444\) Willis’s note: “For example, F. Kielhorn, ‘The Sasbahu Temple Inscription of Mahipala, of Vikrama-Samvat 1150,’ IA 40 (1886), line 102: dadau rājāniruddhāya tena sattrāṃ pravarttate. Sircar, Indian Epigraphical Glossary, s.v. The brief comment offered in Sircar, Select Inscriptions, 1: 348, n. 5, is sufficient to show the degree to which the sattrā and other offerings have not been properly analysed.”
happened in the case of the *sattra*, even though in this case apparently the same term was used by donors and recipients alike.

IIA.3. Illiteracy

This chapter returns to the question of writing in early Brahmanical texts. Writing is still not mentioned in texts that were composed well after it had become widespread in India, even in Brahmanical circles.\(^{445}\) This is true of the *Mānava Dharmaśāstra*, better known as *Manusmṛti*. Olivelle (2005: 24-25) has argued that this text dates from the 2\(^{nd}\) to 3\(^{rd}\) centuries CE, and this may indeed be its date.\(^{446}\) At this time writing was used, also by Brahmanical authors.\(^{447}\) And yet, the *Mānava Dharmaśāstra* only refers to writing as it was used in legal documents, never as the means by which the text itself had been laid down.\(^{448}\) Few would conclude from this that the *Mānava Dharmaśāstra* was a text that had been composed and handed down only orally. The text simply continues the tradition of pretending that important Brahmanical compositions had nothing to do with writing. Similar things could be said about the *Vasiṣṭha Dharmasūtra*, whose chronological relationship to the *Mānava Dharmaśāstra* remains obscure. This text, too, refers to written evidence in judicial proceedings, but to no other contexts in which writing had its place (as, presumably, in composing and studying the *Vasiṣṭha Dharmasūtra*).

In spite of this attitude toward writing, the Brahmanical tradition takes pride in having produced intellectually sophisticated texts from an early date onward. Pāṇini’s grammar, which, as we have seen, may date from before Alexander, is the example *par excellence*. As far as we can tell, the Brahmanical tradition sees no contradiction in the coexistence of illiteracy and intellectual sophistication; as is its wont, it remains silent on the question. For modern scholars it is a challenge. The present chapter will discuss the challenge and some solutions that have been proposed.

IIA.3.1. The problem

\(^{445}\) Aitarya Āranyaka 5.3.3 is often cited in connection with the question whether writing was known in Vedic times. According to Falk (1992) it does not concern writing. Houben (forthcoming; see also 2015: 4-5) disagrees, stating: “It can … not be excluded that the couple of terms, *ullikhya* and *avalikhya*, refers to the writing and erasing of writing on a wooden writing board”. Saraju Rath informs me that the earliest surviving depiction in sculpture of a Brahmanical scribe occurs in Nagarjunakondā and dates from the third century CE.

\(^{446}\) See § I.2.2, above.


\(^{448}\) Hofer 2009.
In classical Greece, the production and use of written texts began to increase rapidly around the early fifth century BCE, and accelerated tremendously during the course of the fifth and fourth centuries. Complete illiteracy must have been common in the early fifth century, but much less so in the late fourth. During a period of barely two centuries literacy had become widespread, so one can reasonably and fruitfully ask what transformations of thought and expression this entailed.

The situation in India is entirely different. We are in no position to determine a period of two centuries during which literacy became an inalienable part of society, so that the effects of this change might then be studied. We do know approximately when writing began to be used in India, but we do not know how widespread its use then was. The surviving literature, though voluminous, rarely mentions reading and writing, and where it does, it is likely to do so in order to give expression to the inferior status of these activities. Indeed, the *Mahābhārata* (13.24.70) tells us that those who write down the *Veda* go to hell.⁴⁴⁹ A number of texts were handed down orally, as are some to this day; it is difficult to find out exactly which texts fell into this category at any particular period. The Brahmins, sometimes referred to as the literate caste, were in reality first of all ritual specialists who knew their sacred texts by heart. They could accomplish their ritual tasks without literacy, and there can be no doubt that many learned Brahmins were strictly speaking illiterate. In this situation it is not easy to study the effects of literacy.

I will concentrate here on a feature that has been claimed to have arisen in India independently of literacy, viz. rationality. The discussion of rationality and its relation to literacy has been inspired by the anthropologist Jack Goody who, in a number of publications, has presented a ‘great divide’ theory, not specifically for India, but for all societies that pass from an oral to a literate stage.⁴⁵⁰ Goody did his own fieldwork among the LoDagaa of Northern Ghana, where he recorded — the first time in writing, later using a tape recorder — the recitation of their Bagre myth. Based on this experience, and on the analysis to which the resulting corpus was subjected, Goody arrived at certain ideas about orality that he considers generally valid.

II.A.3.2. Ordinary memorisation versus Vedic memorisation

A number of Indologists have reacted to Goody’s ideas and pointed out that his conclusions cannot be extended to India without major adjustments. Beside ordinary memorisation, India knows an altogether different kind of memorisation, viz. Vedic memorisation.⁴⁵¹ This kind of memorisation appears to be unique in the world, and must, in India itself, be strictly distinguished from other forms of memorisation. Vedic memorisation, which a youngster acquires in his teens or even before, uses special techniques to make sure that no syllable of the text committed to memory be lost.⁴⁵² Understanding the content of what is learnt by heart is not part of this training,⁴⁵³ and is sometimes claimed to be a hindrance rather than a help.⁴⁵⁴

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⁴⁵⁰ For Goody on rationality, see esp. Goody 1996, chapters 1 and 2.
⁴⁵¹ Goody's ideas on the Vedas can be found in Goody 1987, chapter 4.
⁴⁵² See e.g. Staal 1961. The effects of such memorisation can be observed in the brain; Hartzell et al. 2015.
⁴⁵³ Aithal 1991: 11; see also the passage from al-Bīrūnī cited below. Kane (HistDh II/I p. 348) claims: “Even in the 20th century ... there are hundreds of brāhmaṇas who learn not only the
Memorising the Veda in this manner goes hand in hand with the refusal to write down these texts. This at any rate is what the Persian traveller al-Biruni maintained in the eleventh century, in the following often cited passage:455 “The Brahmīns recite the Veda without understanding its meaning, and in the same way they learn it by heart, the one receiving it from the other. Only few of them learn its explanation, and still less is the number of those who master the contents of the Veda and their interpretation to such a degree as to be able to hold a theological disputation. ... They do not allow the Veda to be committed to writing, because it is recited according to certain modulations, and they therefore avoid the use of the pen, since it is liable to cause some error, and may occasion an addition or a defect in the written text. In consequence it has happened that they have several times forgotten the Veda and lost it ... [N]ot long before our time, Vasukra, a native of Kashmir, a famous Brahmin, has of his own account undertaken the task of explaining the Veda and committing it to writing. He has taken on himself a task from which everybody else would have recoiled, but he carried it out because he was afraid that the Veda might be forgotten and entirely vanish out of the memories of men, since he observed that the characters of men grew worse and worse, and that they did not care much for virtue, nor even for duty.” Several centuries before al-Biruni the Chinese pilgrim Yijing wrote:456 “The Vedas have been handed down from mouth to mouth, not transcribed on paper or leaves.” The means at our disposal confirm that Vedic memorisation has been, and still is, highly efficacious. A number of Vedic texts appear to have been preserved in this manner for countless generations without any deviation from

whole of the Rgveda ... by heart, but also commit to memory the pada text of the Rgveda, the Aitareya Brāhmaṇa and Āranyaka and the six Vedāṅgas (which include the 4000 aphorisms of Pāṇini and the extensive Nirukta of Yāṣka) without caring to understand a word of this enormous material.” And Bühler claimed in the 19th century (1886: xlvii): “A perfect Vaidik of the Āśvalāyana school knows the Rig-veda according to the Śamhitā, Pada, Krama, Jaṭā and Ghana Pāthas, the Aitareya Brāhmaṇa and the Āranyaka, the ritualistic Śūtras of Āśvalāyana, Śaunaka’s Prāttiśākhya and the Śikṣā, Yāṣka's Nirukta, the grammar of Pāṇini, the Vedic calendar or Jyotisa, the metrical treatise called the Chandas, Yājñavalkya's Dharmaśāstra, portions of the Mahābhārata, and the philosophical Śūtras of Kaṇāda, Jaimini, and Bādarāyana. Similarly the Vaidiks of the Yajus, Śāman, and Atharvan schools are able to recite, more or less perfectly, the whole of the works of their respective Śākhās as well as some other non-Vedic books. But it would be in vain to expect from such men an explanation of the literary treasures which they possess.” Unfortunately Kane does not tell us how thoroughly the other texts (different from the Rgveda) are being memorised, and nor does Bühler specify how many perfect Vaidikas there were in his time. My own very limited dealings with one of the most respected Vedic reciters around Poona, Pandit Kinjawadekar Shastri, taught me that his knowledge of the Rgveda and its Pada- and Kramapātha was stunning, but that this same traditional scholar (who did indeed admit not to understand the contents of what he recited) had difficulties with a passage from the Aitareya Āranyaka (or was it the Upanisad?) which I asked him to recite.

454 Interestingly, learning to read and write disables the South Slavic narrative poets studied by Parry and Lord; Ong 1982: 59. It is not known to me whether this question has ever been raised with respect to Vedic reciters. Ong further observes (p. 61): “Significantly, illiterate singers in the wedely literate culture of modern Yugoslavia develop and express attitudes toward writing .... They admire literacy and believe that a literate person can do even better what they do, namely, recreate a lengthy song after hearing it only once.” This observation cannot easily be transferred to Vedic recitation in India.

455 Sachau 1888: I: 125.

456 Tr. Takakusu 1896: 182.
the original. Indeed, “We can actually regard present-day Rgveda-recitation as a *tape recording* of what was first composed and recited some 3000 years ago.” (Witzel 1995a: 91).

Since Vedic memorisation plays a crucial role in some of the arguments to be considered below, I will cite a passage from the introduction to a recent book by K. Parameswara Aithal, who here describes what he has learnt by visiting numerous accomplished Vedic reciters. Aithal depicts the method of teaching in the following manner (1991: 12):

In the early stages the procedure is somewhat like this: The young boys who have had their initiation (*upanayana*), sit in front of the teacher after they have finished their purificatory baths and performed the daily rituals, etc. The teaching begins early in the morning, soon after sunrise, with the chanting of the sacred syllables HARIH OM, as prescribed by the *Veda-lakṣana* texts. First the teacher recites each *mantra*, *pāda* (= quarter) by *pāda*, and the pupil recites it three times immediately after the teacher. This *pāda* by *pāda* recitation is repeated twelve times. The same method is followed for the recitation of the halves of the *mantra*-s and for the full *mantra*-s. Usually one session lasts until one *adyāya* is completed. Altogether each *mantra* is repeated 108 times. The study of the *pada*, *krama*, *jaṭā*, etc., is variously graded according to the ability of the individual student. The procedure is very strenuous and time-consuming and thus requires great patience. Since no material reward, nor any kind of professional prospect can be expected from such a study these days, firm faith in the spiritual efficacy and divinity of the Vedic Word is the essential prerequisite for such a rigorous course of study.

The existence of this unique form of Vedic memorisation, which is without known parallel, appears to be uncontroversial among Indologists. It primarily concerns Vedic texts, and is not easily transferred to other texts, not even to other holy texts. This is illustrated by descriptions such as the one by C. J. Fuller, from which we learn (1984: 138; cited Goody 2000: 17) that pupils at a school in Tamilnadu that is under the overall control of the Kanchipuram Śaṅkarācārya’s monastery learn passages from traditional Āgamas “by memorising exactly the passages recited to them by their teachers. It is considered vital that these passages' words, pronunciation and scansion are all memorised absolutely accurately, and this cannot be done by reading books. ... Only when a passage has been fully memorised does the teacher explain its meaning.” In spite of this imposed

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457 Note that Renou (1960: 41 n. 1) provides some information that suggests that writing the Veda was not altogether unknown in relatively early days: “La Pân[ini]ya Śiksā 32 (= Yājñ[iavl]ka] Ś[ka] 198) (Ghosh 1938: 72; JB) moque les récitateurs qui utilisent un texte écrit, les *likhitapāṭhaka* (en même temps que les *anarthajñā*); la Nār[adiya] Ś[i] 2.8.19 s’élève également contre celui qui lit. Le *Mahābhārata* 13.23.72 vulg. (= Mḥbh 13.24.70; JB) juxtapose les *vedānāṃ lekhakāḥ* avec les corrupteurs (*dūṣaka*) et les vendeurs du V[eda] (*vedavikrayin*).” Kumārila Bhaṭṭa’s *Tantravārttika* (6th or 7th century CE) on *Mimamsāśāstra* 1.3.7 (p. 1231. 20-21) contains the following statement: *yathaiśvāyāyaśijaññatād vedal lekhyāḍipūrvakāti / śūddrāṅdhigatād vāpi dharmajñānam na saṃmatam // ... “Just as no knowledge of dharma is accepted [to arise] from the Veda if it is not properly mastered, if writing etc. have preceded it, or if it has been studied by a Śūdra.” Further passages that discourage the use of writing are referred to in Kane, HistDh II/I p. 348-349. See also Malamoud 1987.
discipline these traditional Āgamas are not being preserved by an exclusively and uninterrupted oral tradition.  

The school just mentioned was founded in the early 1960s, and one of its teacher's concerns is that many pupils forget much of what they have learnt after returning to work in their temples; not even the refresher courses run by the school can prevent this. It is not impossible that medical texts were memorised in a similar manner, whether with more success we do not know. One of them, the Suśrutasamhitā, describes the process as follows:  

“...At the time of study the teacher should teach the pupil according to his capacity pada, pāda or śloka. And those padas, pādas and ślokas should be arranged in order ( ?, kramena), and thus one should combine them one by one.” This passage shows some similarity with texts describing the teaching of Vedic texts, but it is too short to derive definitive conclusions from it.

As stated above, not all memorisation in India is of the Vedic kind. Goody (2000: 13-14) draws attention to a study by John D. Smith (1991) of the Rajasthani epic of Pābūjī. Smith (1991: 26) points out that the epic of Pābūjī has “a degree of textual fixity that seems not to be known in other oral epic traditions”, but this does not change the fact that the differences between the performances by different performers are considerable (pp. 25-26). Indeed, Smith is of the opinion that “[t]here is some reason to suppose that the epic as performed at the present day actually is more stylised, more ‘flat’, than at an earlier period — in other words, that there has been an actual shift away from a differentiated narrative and towards greater and greater uniformity” (p. 24). It may here be added that the reciters of this Rajasthani epic learn their text, along with other skills, by practice only, with no formal preceptor (p. 39). Interestingly, Smith’s chief informant maintained that the oral transmission was a secondary development from an original written form (pp. 18-19). However that may be, Smith’s study reminds us that memorisation of the Vedic kind and memorisation of the ‘ordinary’ kind are strictly to be kept apart, even in India. Colas (1999: 38) illustrates the same contrast with the help of two classical texts: “les transmissions orales qui ... véhiculèrent [ces deux textes] furent de nature très différentes. Le premier texte est le Rgveda, transmis oralement et sans corruption pendant vingt-cinq siècles, grâce à un ensemble de mnémotechniques réservées à certains groupes de brahmanes: la fidélité de l’oralité védique surpassed alors de loin celle de la transmission écrite. À l’opposé, l’autre texte, l’épopée du Mahābhārata ..., a fluctué au gré de la récitation des bardes, il foisonne en fautes grammaticales et défie les méthodes modernes de l’édition critique.”

458 Cp. Fuller 1999: 52: “In principle, the teaching method is entirely oral ... Nevertheless, students do have copies of the texts they are learning, and — rather like actors learning their lines — they often refer to the words on paper to help them memorise them. ... All the gurus insist that oral instruction is indispensable and that memorisation is far more important than understanding. .. [The students] mainly learn a series of relatively short passages from the manuals ... of Aghorasiva or other preceptors ...”

459 Suśrutasamhitā 1 (Sūtrasthāna), 3.54: ... adhyayanakāle sīsyāya yathāśakti gurur upadiṣet padam pādam ślokaṃ vā, te ca padapādaslokaḥ bhūyāḥ krameṇānusandheyāḥ, evam ekaikāśo ghaṭayet. Falk (2001a: 196) paraphrases and comments: “teaching proceeds either in pādas, half-stanzas of full stanzas depending on the capacity of the pupil. After that the taught portions are to be combined one by one. Unfortunately, the process referred to by kramena is not described in full.” Scharfe (2002: 261) translates te ca padapādaslokaḥ bhūyāḥ krameṇānusandheyāḥ as “and these words, quarters and stanzas should be step by step paraphrased”.

460 For a study of a large number of oral epics in India see Blackburn et al. 1989.
IIA.3.3. Pāṇini

As already indicated, Goody connects rationality with literacy. The term ‘rationality’ is notoriously vague, and there will be occasion to say more about it below. At this point it is important to mention that ancient India has left us a remarkably sophisticated intellectual composition, the famous grammar of Pāṇini; many scholars consider this grammar to be a manifestation of rationality if ever there was one. Indeed, they like to recall that the linguist Leonard Bloomfield (1933: 11) called it "one of the greatest monuments of human intelligence". Some Indologists use Pāṇini's grammar to criticize the very notion that the development of rationality is intimately linked to the appearance of literacy. One of them is Frits Staal, who has published articles with titles such as “The fidelity of oral tradition and the origins of science” (1986) and “The independence of rationality from literacy” (1989). Staal believes that we are “under the sway of cultural prejudices” including “the prejudice that writing is more reliable and therefore better than memory” (1986: 27).

In the publications just mentioned, Staal concentrates on two areas of early Indian thought, both of which he considers sciences: the science of ritual and the science of grammar.461 Both are historically linked to Vedic recitation and memorisation: the science of ritual because Vedic recitation takes place during the ritual, and the science of grammar because it deals, among other things, with the sandhi between words. (Vedic recitation distinguishes two versions of the recited texts, the samhitāpātha and the padapātha; the former is the version with sandhi, the latter the one without it.) Staal, however, goes further. The Vedic tradition of transmission, he states (1986: 27/275), “has led to scientific discoveries that are of enduring interest and from which the contemporary West still has much to learn”. Staal is not content with the assertion that this tradition of transmission was merely an interesting object of study; he is convinced that these sciences were somehow part of that tradition: that they arose from within it. More specifically, he believes that Pāṇini’s grammar was composed without the help of writing.

Staal is well enough acquainted with Pāṇini’s grammar to know how extraordinarily complex it is. He cites earlier scholars who were puzzled by this, but points out that in many cases “the at first sight puzzling order of Pāṇini’s rules enables him to make generalizations that would fail to be captured otherwise” (1986: 270). This obliges Staal to think of a way in which Pāṇini could have composed this complex grammar without the use of writing. He suggests two solutions. The first is: Pāṇini was an extraordinary genius. Realising that this solution may not find favour with all his readers (because it does little beyond giving a name to the problem), Staal then proposes the following explanatory scenario (Staal 1986: 36-37/284-285):

Pāṇini worked in close collaboration with some colleagues or, more likely, pupils. Let us assume, for example, that he had more or less completed the rules of vowel sandhi, and provisionally formulated these in a consistent manner and to his satisfaction. Now there appears a problem elsewhere in the grammar; and the only way in which it can be given a simple solution is by inverting two of the sandhi rules he had just formulated. Immediately a host of problems arise, and the rule

461 For the science of ritual as conceived of by Staal, see Staal 1982.
system begins to generate ungrammatical forms. How to save it, safely modify and keep track of it without losing the thread?

The solution is simple: Pāṇini asked his favorite pupil to memorize the rules for vowel sandhi he had provisionally formulated. He turned his attention elsewhere, and returned to effect the required inversion. The student who was given the special assignment heard it, and knew precisely how to react to it by reformulation. Other pupils who had memorised other portions of the grammar were eagerly listening in order to find out how any proposed modification would affect their domain; and if trouble arose, they immediately took steps to overcome the problem by changing the rules, their order, their formulation, or whatever else had to be changed. This led to revisions elsewhere in the grammar, supervised and synthesized by Pāṇini himself. There are many ad hoc devices for patching up rules that must have been resorted to on such occasions and that can in fact explain certain oddities that we meet with in the corners of Pāṇini’s grammar.

I have quoted this passage at length because it both plays, and has to play, an essential role in Staal’s argument, and in that of all those who maintain that Pāṇini’s grammar is the product of an exclusively oral culture.

Staal’s reflections find support, at least at first sight, in subsequently published studies about writing in ancient India. Harry Falk’s *Schrift im alten Indien* (1993) is widely regarded as the definitive study on this subject. It shows that all the literary indications that had been taken to prove the use of writing before the period of emperor Aśoka (ca. 268-233 BCE) do no such thing. Moreover, Falk maintains that the inscriptions of Aśoka themselves show that writing was new, and underwent important improvements during the realm of the emperor itself. In other words, writing was not introduced into India until just before, or during, the reign of Aśoka. Falk adds that the script used in Aśoka’s inscriptions is insufficiently refined phonologically to be used for Sanskrit; this adaptation supposedly occurred several centuries later.

It is no surprise that Falk subscribes to Staal’s position to the extent that Pāṇini’s grammar must have been composed orally, without any use of writing whatsoever. Indeed, Falk states in an article (1990: 110) that it is our fault, not Pāṇini’s, that it is difficult for us to imagine how such an intricate system could have been developed without writing.

Here, I submit, Falk goes too far. It is fair to expect that we believe that Vedic memorisation — though without parallel in any other human society — has been able to preserve very long texts for many centuries without losing a syllable. The evidence in support of this is strong, and the determined sceptic can, still today, visit traditional Vedic scholars and test the extent and the precision of their mastery of the texts concerned. However, the oral composition of a work as complex as Pāṇini’s grammar is not only

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Cousins (2013: 95) considers it yet "quite unbelievable" that Aśoka could have have his numerous inscriptions carved "only a decade or so after the invention of the alphabet in which the inscriptions were written" and "therefore exclude[s] the possibility of the creation of the Brāhmī alphabet during the realm of Aśoka". This position finds support in pre-Aśokan writings in Brāhmī that have come to light; see Houben & Rath 2012: 13. These two authors conclude (p. 14): “Brāhmī did exist at least a century or two before Aśoka and that too in distant Sri Lanka”. See further below.
without parallel in other human cultures, it is without parallel in India itself.\textsuperscript{463} It would have to be regarded as a totally unique event, in India and in the world, and here the least one can ask for is some indication as to how Pāṇini did it. It simply will not do to state that our difficulty in conceiving any such thing is our problem.\textsuperscript{464} Staal understood this. The credibility of his position, and that of Falk, is intimately linked to the plausibility of his explanation.

In this context it is only appropriate to point out that Pāṇini, far from being totally unfamiliar with writing, is generally accepted (also by Falk) to be the first Indian author to unambiguously refer to it.\textsuperscript{465} It is true that the brevity of his reference does not allow us to determine with certainty what kind of writing he was referring to. Hinüber (1990: 57) suggests Kharoṣṭhī or Aramaic but prefers the former; Falk (1993: 258-259) argues that it must have been Aramaic, a script used exclusively by a professional class of writers in the service of the Achaemenid Empire. Aramaic was not used or understood by anyone outside this caste of writers, certainly not by Brahmins. Falk's is a possible interpretation of Pāṇini’s reference to lipi ‘script’, but clearly not the only one.

To this must be added that, thanks to the work carried out by Hinüber (1990: 34-35) and Falk (1993: 303-304), we now know that Pāṇini lived, in all probability, far closer in time to the period of Aśoka than had hitherto been thought. According to Falk’s reasoning, Pāṇini must have lived during the decennia following 350 BCE, i.e. just before (or contemporaneously with?) the invasion by Alexander of Macedonia. Indeed, in a more recent publication (Falk 1994: 326-327) the possibility is considered that Pāṇini may have lived under the Mauryas (which is what Patañjali believed), and therefore (until) after the invasion of Alexander. It is moreover generally agreed that Pāṇini lived in the Northwest of the Indian subcontinent, in what is now Pakistan.\textsuperscript{466}

Falk and those who agree with him like to cite the evidence from Megasthenes who, around 300 BCE, recorded that no writing was used in India. Megasthenes’ evidence, which seems to be reliable,\textsuperscript{467} may apply to the heartland of India, primarily the capital Pātaliputra of the Maurya Empire to which he had been sent as ambassador by Seleucus Nicator. It is an altogether different question whether Megasthenes’ testimony can be taken to be valid for the Northwest of the subcontinent, which was (or had been until very recently) part of Seleucus’ empire. Indeed, Nearchus’ earlier testimony

\textsuperscript{463} Cf. Malamoud 1997: 105-06; 2002: 148: “Mais peut-être faut-il distinguer entre ce que requiert la composition d'un texte et les caractéristiques qui facilitent sa transmission. Il est certain que les Sūtra, par de tout autres moyens que la poésie, sont conçus pour être confiés à la mémoire. Mais l'enchaînement de ces fils, surtout de ceux qui tissent la grammaire, suppose de la part des auteurs une prévision de tous les détail de l'ensemble, une mémoire raisonnable, une puissance intellectuelle dont on voit mal comment elles pourraient se déployer sans le secours de l'écriture.”

\textsuperscript{464} All Falk says is (1990: 110): “Before Pāṇini perfected the system there were many generations in different parts of the subcontinent working on it and it is impossible to reconstruct the steps or to estimate the span of time needed to lead to such an end.”

\textsuperscript{465} Hinüber (1990: 57) mentions a passage in the Rāmāyaṇa (1.12.6) which may have contained lipikara, the word known to Pāṇini, in the meaning ‘painter’ rather than ‘writer’, but this can hardly have been the meaning known to Pāṇini.

\textsuperscript{466} Cp. § I.1.1, above.

\textsuperscript{467} See however Houben & Rath 2012: 13: “the statements of Megasthenes may have to be reconsidered.”
confirms the existence of writing in the parts of the subcontinent that he visited with Alexander.\textsuperscript{468} Pāṇini, as we have seen, lived in those parts.

Regarding the early history of writing in India the following passage from Richard Salomon's book \textit{Indian Epigraphy} must be cited, which refers to various other publications.\textsuperscript{469} This passage reads (1998: 12):

[A] new body of material has recently come to light that seems to support the older theory that Brāhmī existed before Mauryan times, that is, in the fourth century B.C. or possibly even earlier. This is a small group of potsherds bearing short inscriptions, evidently proper names, which were found in the course of excavations at Anurādhapura, Sri Lanka in strata which are said to be securely assigned by radio-carbon dating to the pre-Mauryan period. Various dates have been proposed for these graffiti, ranging from the sixth to the early fourth century B.C. The more recent publications on the subject have tended to favor the later date within this range, but in any case, these inscriptions still seem to show that Brāhmī did indeed predate the Mauryan period.

Salomon cautions his readers to be careful, and he is no doubt right in doing so.\textsuperscript{470} Nevertheless, it cannot be excluded that the script Pāṇini knew may have been Aramaic, Kharoṣṭhī, or an early form of Brāhmī, or indeed any two or even all three of these.\textsuperscript{471}

In the present context it is worthwhile to recall that the \textit{Ṛgveda Padapātha} may have been the written version of the \textit{Ṛgveda}, written down before Pāṇini. This theory would explain the archaic features that the Padapātha — unlike the Samhitāpātha — preserves. These features have been discussed in § I.2.6, above, and need not be repeated here. We may however recall that the thesis of a written Padapātha has been revived by Michael Witzel (2011), though in a rather different shape. According to Witzel, the Padapātha of the \textit{Ṛgveda} was not itself written down, but was created under the influence of an Avestan Padapātha-like text, which \textit{was} written down.

Falk is aware of the archaic features of the \textit{Ṛgveda Padapātha} and of their importance in the debate about writing in ancient India. His book \textit{Schrift im alten Indien} promised to deal with them in extenso in a separate publication (1993: 250). The intended article has subsequently come out (Falk 2001a). It contains an interesting, though speculative, account of the origin of the Samhitāpātha and Padapātha of the \textit{Ṛgveda}, in which it is postulated that these two versions at some time in the past drifted apart, to get reunited again afterwards. No word is said about the Padapātha's archaic features, and one must perhaps assume that the period of separate development is to be held responsible for the differences between the two versions (even though Falk does not say

\textsuperscript{468} So Goyal 1985: 82-100. Hinüber (1990: 21) considers it probable that Nearchus referred to Aramaic writing.


\textsuperscript{470} Rumour has it that a mistake was made in the radio-carbon dating.

\textsuperscript{471} Hinüber (1990: 55 f.) expresses surprise about the fact that the Maurya Empire introduced two completely different scripts (Kharoṣṭhī and Brāhmī) at the same time. He comes to the conclusion that Kharoṣṭhī is older than Brāhmī. This conclusion may need reconsideration in the light of the discoveries in Sri Lanka.
so).\footnote{One might then also have to assume that the \textit{Rgveda Padapāṭha} was preserved in a more western area than its \textit{Samhitāpāṭha}, where language was less affected by retroreflection; see Deshpande 1995: 74, with references to Mehendale, Bloch and Burrow.}
The question whether this explanation (if it is one) is better than the one it must replace remains open.

Summing up, it is an open question whether Pāṇini used writing in composing his grammar. If he did, it may well be that we owe this much admired piece of scholarship to that fact. But perhaps he didn't. The very uncertainty that surrounds the first use of writing by Indian scholars obliges us to refrain from drawing a definite conclusion.\footnote{More on the question of Pāṇini and writing in Appendix VII, below.}

By way of conclusion we may look at a passage of Hartmut Scharfe's recent book \textit{A New Perspective on Pāṇini} (2009). The relevance of this passage for the question of Pāṇini's acquaintance with writing justifies it to be quoted at length (pp. 69-71):

Many of Pāṇini's rules are formulated so dense that it is not easy to see how they could be pronounced, let alone be understood and applied. \ldots VII 2 5 \ldots \textit{hmyanta-kṣaṇa-śvasa-jāgr-ni-śvy-editām} \ldots must have been recited slowly: \textit{h-m-y-anta} \ldots to be understandable. In VI 1 3 \ldots \textit{na ndrāḥ samyogādayah} \ldots similarly \textit{n-d-rāḥ} must have been recited very slowly. Difficult would also be the distinction of two nasals in VII 2 115 \textit{aco ṅiṭī}.

\begin{quote}
What may be difficult becomes virtually impossible when two stops are involved. In III 4 107 Pāṇini wanted to teach that personal endings beginning with \textit{ṭ} or \textit{ṭh} receive an augment \textit{s} (\textit{su}'); but [53] a genitive dual \textit{*t-th.oh} would have been more difficult to pronounce. Rule III 4 107 therefore appears as \textit{sut tiṭ.oh}. In VIII 2 38 he referred to a suffix beginning with \textit{ṭ} or \textit{ṭh} instead with \textit{tath.oh} \ldots In VII 2 104 \ldots \textit{ku tiṭ.oh} \ldots Here again \textit{*t-h.oh} would be difficult to pronounce let alone be understood properly. None of the endings referred to in III 4 107 (viz. \textit{-ta}, \textit{-tam}, \textit{-thas}, \textit{-tham}) justifies the 'ti' of Pāṇini’s sūtra, nor do the endings referred to in VII 2 104 (\textit{ku-tah}, \textit{ku-tra}, \textit{ku-ha}). If the \textit{ṭi'} in III 4 107 (\textit{ti-th.oh}) and in VII 2 104 (\textit{ti-h.oh}) do not represent an \textit{ṭi'} in the object language (i.e., Sanskrit), they could be tags, bound to vanish as the Sanskrit words emerge. They would have been marked with a nasal pronunciation that was subsequently lost. No unwanted forms would result, since no tag \textit{ṭi'} is taught except in connection with roots. We would have a vacuous application; the commentators explain the insertion of \textit{ṭi'} as \textit{uccāraṇārtham} “for the sake of pronunciation”.

But this explanation would not be acceptable in other cases, e.g. in VI 1 71 \textit{hrasvasya piti krti tuk} \ldots The augment \textit{ṭ} is tagged with a $^{k}$ which indicates that the \textit{ṭ} is added at the end of the root. But what is the status of \textit{uṭ} in \textit{tuṭ}? It is not a valid sound of the word in the object language (i.e., Sanskrit), and it cannot be a tag because of unwanted consequences. A tag $^{a}$ indicates that a stop denotes its whole class, i.e. \textit{tu} denotes \textit{ṭ}, \textit{th}, \textit{d}, \textit{dh}, \textit{n}, except when it is a suffix: I 1 69 \textit{an-udit savarnasya cāpratayah}. Since \textit{tuṭ} is not a suffix, we would get the undesired form \textit{sarva-jīth}, \textit{sarvajīd}, etc. along with the correct \textit{sarva-jīt}. The correct form of Pāṇini’s sūtra should be \textit{hrasvasya piti kṛti tī}.

In the aorist form \textit{apapatar} “he fell” Pāṇini did not recognize the reduplication of the root $\sqrt{p\text{a}}$; he assumed an infix \textit{p} (i.e., \textit{apa[p]tat}) that is tagged with an $^{a}$ to mark it as a infix: VII 4 19 \ldots \textit{pataḥ pu}$^{a}$ \ldots Again, \textit{pu} would
include not only /p/, but also /ph, b, bh, m/ which is not desired. The correct form of Pāṇini’s sūtra should be \textit{patah p\textsuperscript{m}}.

In Pāṇini’s sūtra III 1 108 \textit{hanas ta ca} … the correct form should be \textit{hanas t ca}. It is obvious, I think, that \textit{hrasvasya piti \textit{kṛti tk}, patah pm and hanas t ca} would be difficult to pronounce and even harder to understand — or to apply correctly. But with slow and careful recitation and proper explanation the listener could grasp the meaning of the rules.

As is clear from Scharfe’s last sentence, he proposes that a number of Pāṇinian sūtras were initially not pronounced as they are now. To explain the present form of these sūtras, he suggests that the process of writing them down at a later time is responsible for the distortions. This is not however true for all of them: some unpronounceable sūtra have survived in their original shape: \textit{hmyanta- …, … na ndrāḥ …}, \textit{aco īṇiti}.

Scharfe is convinced that Pāṇini composed his grammar orally, without the help of writing. If one considers the option that it may not have been composed orally, another explanation for these noteworthy features becomes possible. In that case one may consider that Pāṇini \textit{wrote} all these sūtras in their unpronounceable shape, so that none of the difficulties and possible confusions pointed out by Scharfe were present, because unpronounceability would not be an obstacle.

However, Pāṇini’s grammar would \textit{also} be recited, not least because Brahmanism came to cultivate the image of a tradition independent of writing. And the relative weight given to the recited version of the text may then have turned the oral text into its orthodox version, in spite of the contradictions and potential confusions that could result from this.\textsuperscript{474}

This way of viewing the matter frees us from the obligation to postulate that early recitation of Pāṇini’s grammar was particularly slow and careful. The supposition that Pāṇini could write unpronounceable sequences such as \textit{tk}, \textit{pm} and \textit{tca} poses no problem once we assume that he could write \textit{hmyanta}, \textit{na ndrāḥ} and \textit{aco īṇiti} (which we have to if we believe that Pāṇini used writing for composing his grammar).

IIA.3.4. The \textit{Mahābhāṣya}

According to Falk, Pāṇini’s earliest surviving commentators Kātyāyana and Patañjali did not use writing either.\textsuperscript{475} It is worth our while to briefly review some of his arguments. Consider the following:\textsuperscript{476}

\textsuperscript{474} Scharfe adds a further example on p. 114: a short \textit{a} is added to four of the five roots enumerated in P. 7.2.57 \textit{kṛta-cṛta-chṛda-trda-ntṛah}. For Scharfe this short \textit{a} is a non-phonemic sound, for us a sound that the exigencies of recitation added, and which subsequent tradition came to look upon as authoritative.

\textsuperscript{475} According to Mathur (1996: 128 and fig. 60), the Archaeological Museum of Kurukshetra University (accession no. 81.485) contains a terracotta depicting a seated boy who is “writing alphabet on a wooden board in Brahmi script”. Mathur dates this terracotta to the 2\textsuperscript{nd} cent. BCE, roughly the time of Patañjali, and adds: “One such figure is also in the National Museum Collection”.

\textsuperscript{476} Falk 1993: 266-267.
Falk does not express disagreement with Thieme's position that the oral tradition linking Pāṇini with Kātyāyana and Patañjali had been interrupted. And yet, there are good reasons to doubt it.\footnote{Note "that the Vedic reciters who recite the text of the Āṣṭādhyāyī today recite it with the three accents (traisvarya)"; but that this may not correspond to "the original accentuation" of the Āṣṭādhyāyī, Deshpande 2011: 66-67, 74 ff.} What is more, it appears that Patañjali was convinced that he had the text of the Āṣṭādhyāyī as it had been taught by Pāṇini. The passages that have been considered proof that certain features, such as accents, had been lost to Patañjali, do no such thing when examined more closely.\footnote{See Appendix VII, below.}

Let us continue considering Falk's argument. If, for argument's sake, we accept that the oral tradition of the Āṣṭādhyāyī had been interrupted, what else but a written tradition could have saved Pāṇini's grammar from total perdition? Falk suggests the following: "die mündliche Tradition folgte ähnlichen Prinzipien wie die vedische, die über den Wechsel von samhitāpātha- zu padapātha-Rezitation jeglichen Kontakt zur ursprünglichen Diktion der Rṣis verloren hatte". However, accents have been very well preserved in oral Vedic recitation; only the nasalisation of āṁ, preserved in the Ṛgveda Padapātha, has been lost in the Samhitāpātha. Furthermore, Falk's remarks to the extent that neither Kātyāyana nor Patañjali mention manuscripts, variant readings, etc. lose their force in the light of our earlier reflections about Brahmanical culture, and of more recent authors, who certainly did use writing, but never mentioned any of these things.\footnote{For some examples, see Bronkhorst 1991a: 212 f.}

Falk then continues (p. 267):

In Anbetracht dessen, was heute über die Verwendung der Schrift für Sanskrit bekannt ist, erscheint es völlig undenkbar, dass schon um 250 v.Chr. (angeblich: Kātyāyana) oder um 150 v.Chr. (etwas sicherer: Patañjali) ein phonetisch derart raffinierter Text wie die Āṣṭādhyāyī schriftlich fixiert werden konnte. Es fehlten zu jener Zeit immer noch Doppelkonsonanz, virāma, visarga, velarer Nasal, den man für die Āṣṭādhyāyī unbedingt hätte entwerfen müssen, da er hier und in keinem anderen Sanskrit-Text als Phonem erscheint. ... Der Zustand der Brāhmī zur Zeit der Śūngas, die Natur des Textes und vor allem das Schweigen der beiden frühen Kommentatoren zu jeder Form von Schriftlichkeit verlangt zwingend nach der Erklärung, dass Pāṇinis Text, ebenso wie die Vārttikas und wohl auch das Mahābhāṣya selbst, ganz und gar den Bedingungen oraler Tradition folgten.
It is a pity that Falk does not discuss the consequences of his position. The Mahābhāṣya is as long as, if not longer than, the Rgveda. A complete memorisation of the Rgveda, including its Padapātha and Kramapātha, “extends to more than eight years, with ten to twelve hours of learning each day” according to K. P. Aithal (1991: 12), as cited by Falk (1993: 323). There is no evidence that I know of suggesting that even half that time (or for that matter: any time at all) was ever reserved for memorising the Mahābhāṣya in the Vedic style (as opposed to studying it; don’t forget the fundamental difference between Vedic and other forms of memorisation.) The Mahābhāṣya itself complains that ‘nowadays’ students, having studied the Veda, are in no hurry to study Pāṇini’s grammar. It is hard to believe that those same uninspired students would learn Pāṇini’s grammar plus another text the size of the Rgveda by heart.

Yijing’s remarks on the Sanskrit grammarians would at first sight seem to be in disagreement with the above. A closer inspection shows that this is not the case. Yijing, as has been shown in detail by John Brough (1973), made a number of serious mistakes in his account of Sanskrit grammatical literature, confusing both authors and texts. It seems nevertheless clear that he knew (or had heard of) the Mahābhāṣya, which he knew by the name Cūrṇī, but which he failed to distinguish from the vārttikas which it contains. Confusingly, he appears to use the expression Vṛttisūtra for the vārttikas, but ascribes far too great a length to this text (18,000 ślokas), which he seems to believe to have been studied independently from the Cūrṇī. This great length is no doubt to be explained by the fact, pointed out by Brough, that Yijing was unable to discriminate between the vārttikas and the Mahābhāṣya. This leaves us with the question what Yijing may have precisely been referring to when mentioning the duration of studying this text. However that may be, he says the following about it (Takakusu 1896: 175): “Boys of fifteen begin to study this commentary, and understand it after five years. ... All these books (?) should be learnt by heart. But this, as a rule, applies only to men of high talent, while for those of medium or little ability a different measure (method) must be taken according to their wishes. They should study hard day and night, without letting a moment pass for idle repose.” About the Cūrṇī he says (p. 178): “Advanced scholars learn this in three years.”

480 The Rgveda, according to Gonda 1975: 9, contains 165,007 words. A low estimate of the number of words in the Mahābhāṣya — 1412 pages in Kielhorn’s edition, each containing on average some 200 words — comes to a total that is higher than that. (The length of the Mahābhāṣya is said to be 36,000 granthas, i.e., 36,000 x 32 = 1,152,000 syllables; see Bhāgavata 1999: Upodgata p. 09.)

481 Mahā-bh I p. 5 l. 6-11: purākalpa etad āsīt: saṃskārottarakālaṃ brāhmaṇā vyākaraṇam smādhīyate / tebhyas tatra sthānakaranaṇūpradāññajeebhhyo vaidikāḥ śabdā upadiśyante / tad adyatve na tathā / vedam adhīya tvaritā vaktāro bhavanti: vedān no vaidikāḥ śabdāḥ siddhāḥ lokāc ca laukīkāḥ / anarthakam vyākaraṇam iti / tebhyā evam vipratipannabuddhibhyo ’dhyetṛbhya ācārya idam śaśtram anvācaṣte: imāni prayaṇanāḥ adhyeyam vyākaraṇam iti / “In olden days it was like this: brahmans studied grammar after their initiation-ceremony. After they had learnt the different places of articulation, the articulatory organs and the extra-buccal process of articulation, they were taught the Vedic words. Nowadays, it is not like this. Having learnt the Veda [the students] are quick to say: ‘the Vedic words are known [to us] from the Veda, and the ordinary words from common speech. [So] grammar is useless.’ To those students entertaining false notions the teacher teaches this science [of grammar] saying: ‘these are the uses, [therefore] grammar must be studied.’” (tr. Joshi and Roodbergen 1986: 68; modified)
It has to be repeated that Yijing’s remarks have to be read with much caution. But assuming his testimony about the method of studying grammatical texts to be by and large correct, there is an obvious contrast with the way he described Vedic learning, which we already considered above. About the latter he says (p. 182): “The Vedas have been handed down from mouth to mouth, not transcribed on paper or leaves. In every generation there exist some intelligent Brāhmans who can recite the 100,000 verses.” He says no such thing about grammatical texts. In other words, these grammatical texts were not exclusively handed down from mouth to mouth. Indeed, Yijing makes a point of stating that less talented students would not learn them by heart at all. The long duration required for studying the *Mahābhāṣya* (three years? five years? eight years?) can be explained by the great complexity of its contents, not necessarily by the effort needed to learn it by heart. Yijing’s account contains no hint that the *Mahābhāṣya* was ever studied the Vedic way.

If we now return to the question of scripts, it is hard to see how one can be certain that the Brāhmī script at the time of the Śūngas could not yet be used for Sanskrit, since practically all our early evidence is in other languages than Sanskrit. With the growing popularity of Sanskrit or ‘Epigraphical Hybrid Sanskrit’ as inscriptions, languages all the necessary characters (r, au, ē, h, and halanta or virāma) as well as consonantal clusters appear in the inscriptions (Salomon 1998: 37). It is not evident that this is bound to imply that these or similar characters cannot have been used in Sanskrit non-inscriptional writing well before these inscriptions. To this may be added the ‘überraschende Tatbestand’ (Hinüber 1990: 61) that Brāhmī has ligatures which serve no purpose in the Middle-Indic languages for which it is used; ligatures are of course essential for writing Sanskrit.

It is important to insist once again on the difference between Vedic memorisation and other forms of memorisation. Many of the non-Vedic feats of memorisation enumerated in Falk’s chapter “Berichte vom Umfang des Memorierten” (1993: § 14.1, pp. 321 f.) concern either texts that have been handed down in rather widely differing versions, thus showing the unreliability of this method of memorisation (cf. Falk 1993: 322: “Häufig mussten sich die Chinesen mit lückenhaften [Buddhistischen] Texten zufrieden geben, weil ihren Gästen das eine oder andere Kapitel aus dem Gedächtnis

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482 Hinüber (1990: 61) appears to consider it significant that the *Lalitavistara*, where it enumerates the list of Brāhmī signs, skips the letter r. This same list does however contain ai, au, and ē; see Lal(V) p. 89. It is to be kept in mind that the list in the *Lalitavistara* is used to incant some important truths with the help of words or expressions that have the sound concerned in the first or second place (*a: anityah sarvasanskāra[h]; ā: āmaparaśita*; etc.). In such a list there is no place for h and halanta / virāma, and perhaps not for r (the Sanskrit index to the *Abhidharmakosabhāṣya* — Abhidh-k-bh(Hi) — contains just nine entries beginning with r, none of which may have been suitable). It is furthermore not clear that this enumeration of sounds concerns specifically the Brāhmī script. In this context it may be of interest to note that the Kharoṣṭhī script of one of the early Buddhist manuscripts from Gandhāra has a sign for r (i.e. for kr; see Salomon 1999: 123).

483 Cp. Colas 1997: 127: “la finesse de l’analyse phonétique dont témoignent les premières écritures indiennes (attestées au IIIe siècle avant notre ère) trahit l’intervention des érudits mêmes qui déconsidéraient l’écrit. Le bon sens suggère donc que ces clercs employèrent l’écriture plus tôt que le IIIe siècle avant notre ère, peut-être dans des manuscrits utilisés comme aide-mémoire.” On p. 129 Colas expresses his view that the first Indian writing systems must have been created in the circle of grammarians or under their influence.
IIA.3.5. Systematic philosophy

I have concentrated so far on Pāṇini’s grammar because it is probably the most ‘intelligent’ composition from the late-Vedic period that has survived (“one of the greatest monuments of human intelligence”, as we have seen). Writing can help in composing particularly complex works, even though we do not know whether it did in the case of Pāṇini. Writing can have other effects, too. It allows readers access to works that do not belong to their own tradition. There will be a limit to the extent of what even the best memoriser can memorise, and to what he will be willing, or allowed, to memorise. It is difficult to believe that people put much effort into memorising texts which they looked upon as heretical, wrong, or dangerous.

It seems undeniable that Pāṇini was familiar with a considerable portion of Vedic literature, going well beyond any single Veda. So was his commentator Patañjali. This circumstance might be used to argue for the existence of written Vedic texts at the time of these linguists, but this would not be a particularly strong argument. Representatives of different Vedas were in contact with each other (one needs several of them to execute a sacrifice), and it is conceivable that they provided each other with suitable examples to illustrate, say, specific grammatical rules.

However, it was no doubt much harder to gain access to texts belonging to altogether different, even hostile, traditions. This happened in an intellectual development that began some time after Pāṇini, and which distinguishes itself in an essential manner from the development that led to his classical grammar. Let me try to explain what the difference consists in.

It has already been pointed out that Pāṇini’s grammar is a very intelligent piece of work. It does not however challenge generally accepted opinions, as far as we can tell. Even though modern scholarship has been fascinated by, and therefore often has concentrated on, its comparison with modern linguistics, studies that deal with the intellectual background of Pāṇini’s grammar reveal a fundamental continuity with late-Vedic thinking. This fits in with the general picture in which Pāṇini, and perhaps other grammarians before him, organised and systematized ideas that were generally accepted, rather than providing a total break with what preceded.

Some time after Pāṇini such a break — or rather: a number of them — *did* take place in Indian thinking. In the various schools of what is commonly called classical Indian philosophy revolutionary new ideas came up — quite suddenly it appears — which *did* constitute radical breaks with what preceded. Buddhist thinkers all of a sudden denied the existence of phenomenal reality, sometimes going to the extent of claiming

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484 See in this connection Bronkhorst 1987a: 14-42 ("The text history of the Mahābhāṣya").
485 See Greater Magadha ch. III.2.
that no Buddha exists or ever existed. Certain Brahmical thinkers — most notably the Vaiśeśikas — came up with most remarkable analyses of reality, maintaining for example that a pot and its two halves constitute three different entities. Others argued that nothing ever comes into existence, and that future entities exist already in their material causes. The most orthodox defenders and interpreters of the Veda, the Mīmāṃsakas, came to deny the very existence of the Vedic gods and claimed, more generally, that practically nothing in the Veda is to be taken literally. This list could easily be extended. For our present purposes it is most important to see that something dramatic happened to an important number of Indian thinkers during the rather limited period of a few centuries.

One of the great tragedies of Indian intellectual history is that little is known of the details of these momentous changes. Only rarely can we associate a revolutionary development with one or more known individuals. We know even less about the circumstances that set these changes going. However, it seems certain that they had much to do with the fact that the thinkers concerned had to defend their points of view in encounters with opponents who totally disagreed with them. The opposition between Buddhists and Brahmins appears to have been particularly important in all this, but oppositions between schools within these and other movements were important, too. Thinkers were obliged to defend their positions, because they might be summoned by the regional ruler to confront a star speaker from a competing school. As a result they made their position as coherent as possible, and removed, suppressed or de-emphasised any feature that would appear problematic to a critical outsider. If one understands rationality to mean, or imply, openness to criticism (freely accepted or imposed) in all areas, the case could be made that the early Indian philosophers, who had to deal with critics who would not grant them an inch, are at least as much if not more entitled to the qualification ‘rational’ than Pāṇini.

It is important to add some specifications to the above. Debates between proponents of different currents of belief or practice took place long before the beginning of classical Indian philosophy. We can be certain that early Buddhism and Jainism, for example, being missionary movements, did not eschew meetings and discussions with others. The early Buddhist canon preserves memories of such encounters, and the descriptions found in it of early Jainism, for example, turn out to be fairly reliable. Yet neither early Buddhism nor early Jainism felt obliged to improve its own position as a result of such meetings. They did not need to, because there was no one to reward the winner and punish the loser in such informal debates. This, however, appears to have changed in subsequent centuries. We know that in classical India kings might oblige representatives of different movements to participate in public debates, in which much might be at stake, e.g. the life or freedom of the participants, or the well-being of their movement. Public debates of this kind no doubt inspired authors to compose the manuals of debating skills that come into existence during the first centuries of the Common Era.

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487 This is easily misunderstood. Houben, for example, criticises this notion in the following words (2001: 170 n. 8): “there may very well be areas of reality which, for the thinkers involved, are fundamentally beyond critical inquiry”. This may indeed be true for individual thinkers, but that is not the point. The point is that in a rational tradition thus conceived, the enemies and opponents of thinkers will be free to criticise issues that for the latter are beyond critical inquiry, and that the thinkers criticised will yet have to listen and respond to this criticism. A rational tradition must in this way be understood as a social phenomenon, not as a description of the habits of thought of individual thinkers.

488 For an elaboration of this idea of rationality and references, see § III.2, below.
And these same public debates appear to have inspired thinkers to revise and improve their positions, thus creating the schools of classical philosophy. It seems however likely that beside these public debates informal debates continued to be held. After all, the Buddhists and the Jainas were still interested in making converts, and for this purpose discussions are necessary with as yet unconverted people.  

We are informed about the classical debates mainly through the reports of foreign visitors; two examples will be briefly presented here. The Chinese Buddhist pilgrim Xuanzang has left us a detailed account of his visit to India in the first half of the seventh century of the Common Era. In this account he regularly mentions debates between representatives of different schools of thought. The debates he refers to normally took place in the presence of a king, and tended to end in victory for one of the two parties, and defeat for the other. According to the biography of Xuanzang composed by his pupil Huili, Xuanzang himself volunteered to participate in a debate on one occasion. The event is described as follows:

At that time a heretic of the Lokāyatika school came to seek a debate and wrote his argument in fourteen points, which he hung on the door of the monastery, while he announced, ‘If anybody is able to refute any one point of my argument, I shall cut off my head to apologize!’

After the passage of several days, nobody came out to accept the challenge. The Master [= Xuanzang] then asked his personal servant to take down the poster, destroy it, and trample the broken pieces under his feet. Being greatly enraged, the Brahmin asked, ‘Who are you?’ The servant said in reply, ‘I am a servant of the Mahayana-deva.’ The Brahmin, who had already heard of the fame of the Master, was ashamed of himself and did not say anything more. The Master sent for him and brought him to the presence of the Venerable Śūlabhadra [Xuanzang’s teacher of Nālandā Monastery], with various virtuous monks as witnesses, to start a debate with him about the principles of his school and the theories founded by other heretical sects as well.

At this point Xuanzang starts to criticise various heretical schools, among them the two Brahmanical schools of philosophy called Sāmkhya and Vaiśeṣika, but not, surprisingly, the Lokāyatika school. Only his criticism of the Sāmkhya school is given in some detail. The text then continues:

In this manner the argument was carried on with repeated refutations; and the Brahmin remained silent and said nothing. Then he rose to his feet and said with apology, ‘I am defeated, and I am ready to keep my word.’ The Master said, ‘We

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489 Eltschinger (2012b) makes the interesting observation that “the overwhelming majority of the pre-fifth-century Buddhist polemical rhetoric seems to address fellow Buddhists in the form of Abhidharmic disputation. Moreover, the early Mahāyāna literature (śūtras and śāstras alike) pays only marginal attention to the outsiders, concentrating its arguments on the inferiority of the Śrāvakayāna and directing its acrimony against ‘mainstream’ Buddhism. In other words, … the opponents most regularly contended with by the Buddhists were co-religionists.” (p. 431). With regard to the fifth and subsequent centuries, “there is every reason to believe that the rise of Buddhist epistemology and the concomitant decline of Abhidharma can be accounted for as Buddhist answers to new challenges of a non-philosophical character.” (p. 480)

490 Li 1995: 132 f. (modified)
Buddhists do not take any man's life. I now make you my slave, and you should work according to my orders.' The Brahmin was glad to obey the Master's orders with reverence, and was brought to his living quarters. All those who heard about this event praised it with delight.

It is unlikely that this passage accurately presents what happened. It is hard to believe that a Brahmin who was seeking a debate would accept total defeat without as much as uttering a word. But nor would we expect historical accuracy in a document that primarily sings the glory of Master Xuanzang. It will be interesting to see what kind of arguments supposedly led to his victory in debate.

The text does not offer much information with regard to the arguments used, with one notable exception. The Master is supposed to have dealt with the Sāmkhya system of thought in a rather more detailed manner. First he presents an outline of the system, which agrees with what we know about it. After this exposition he draws attention to what he considers its lack of coherence. It is not clear why a follower of the Lokāyatika school should have wished to defend ideas belonging to the altogether different Sāmkhya school of thought. Xuanzang's exposition and refutation of the Sāmkhya position can therefore hardly have been part of his debate with his hapless opponent. Nor is it likely that a real Sāmkhya would have felt defeated by the reflections brought to bear on their system by the Chinese pilgrim. Nevertheless, it is interesting to see that Xuanzang is depicted here as presenting what is an accurate description of the main features of the Sāmkhya philosophy, and that, having presented this outline, he tries to show its inner incoherence. The fundamental assumptions of this philosophy do not, according to the position attributed to Xuanzang, justify the functions it ascribes to the various entities it postulates.

Accounts like this are extremely interesting, and give us a glimpse, if ever so faint, of situations India's philosophers may have been familiar with. In the present context we have to limit our reflections to one issue: How did Xuanzang know the system of his opponents so well? It seems extremely unlikely that he had been trained by one of them. It is much more likely that he had studied their texts, either alone or with the help of a Buddhist teacher. Indeed, Xuanzang himself reports that Sāmkhya and various other non-Buddhist topics were taught at the Buddhist university of Nālandā. It seems safe to conclude that intellectual confrontations like the one involving Xuanzang could not have taken place, at least not in this form, without access to written documents; and indeed, there is no controversy about the extensive use of reading and writing at his period. But what do we know about the debates that took place many centuries before Xuanzang? And what did the participants in those debates know about the views of their opponents? We will return to these questions below.

First we turn to our second example, which is situated a few centuries before the time of Xuanzang. It depicts a debate between a Buddhist and a Sāmkhya in which, this time, the latter is victorious. The story is found in Paramārtha's The Life of Vasubandhu. The main character is the Sāmkhya teacher Vindhyavāsa, who modified the Sāmkhya doctrine and came to think that the doctrine set forth by him was the greatest, and that nothing could be superior to it. However, Buddhism was flourishing at that time. Vindhyavāsa therefore resolved to refute it. None of the great Buddhist masters being present, Vindhyavāsa debates with the old Buddhāmitra, who is completely defeated.

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491 Lalmani Joshi 1967: 127,
Buddhamitra only gets away with his life because he is a Brahmin. Instead he receives a beating and Vindhyaśā receives three lacs of gold as a prize.\textsuperscript{492}

The story has a happy ending after all, for Vasubandhu, after his return, composed a work criticising the Sāṃkhya doctrine in such a competent manner that the heretics had nothing left for them to fall back upon. In this way, without meeting Vindhyaśā, Vasubandhu took full revenge on him and wiped off the disgrace put upon his teacher.

These examples show that loosing a debate could have serious consequences. It is not surprising that debating manuals were produced, some of which have survived. Public debates had to be won, and all possible means were used in order to attain that goal. This included trickery, but also straightforward, and soundly based, criticism of each other’s positions. It is this aspect of the debate tradition that has no doubt exerted a more lasting influence. Criticism directed at others and criticism received from others had the unavoidable effect that all participants in these debates refined their own positions. Incoherent or inconsistent views would not survive scrutiny, neither by an opponent in debate nor by the thinker himself who did not wish to be exposed by those who disagreed with him.

This process of improving and systematising one’s own position becomes visible, perhaps for the first time, in a scholastic development of Buddhism during the centuries preceding the Common Era. Buddhist scholasticism of that period, called Abhidharma, has mainly survived in two bodies of texts, belonging to two schools of Buddhism: Theravāda and Sarvāstivāda. The Theravāda Abhidharma shows ongoing refinement, but little or no attempt to develop a coherent system of thought. Several texts of the Sarvāstivāda Abhidharma, on the other hand, testify to the attempts at coherence made in this school. Since the innovations concerned were made on the basis of traditional material, the result is often quite complex, and this is not the place to deal with them in full detail.\textsuperscript{493} I will mention only a few striking features here. The Sarvāstivāda conception of the world is essentially atomistic. The macroscopic, and therefore composite, objects that we are acquainted with from everyday experience do not really exist. What really exist are the ultimate constituents, called dharmas. A particularly important composite object is the human person, which also does not really exist. The atomistic understanding of the world also finds expression in the belief in momentariness: nothing exists for more than a single moment.\textsuperscript{494} Various questions linked to this atomistic vision of the world are raised and often answered by introducing an appropriate dharma. The question, for example, how different bundles of dharmas stick together so as to form different persons (remember that persons do strictly speaking not exist), is answered with the introduction of a dharma called prāpti ‘possession’. Other difficulties were connected with the belief that mental events occur only one at a time in one person. This leads to difficulties in the case where someone observes, say, his own desire. This activity involves two mental events, the observation and the desire, which cannot simultaneously exist. When the observation is present, the observed desire must of

\textsuperscript{492} Takakusu 1904: 283 f. The passage is cited in full in *Buddhism in the Shadow of Brahmanism* pp. 183-184.

\textsuperscript{493} For a slightly more detailed, but still very incomplete, presentation, see Bronkhorst 2009: 61-114.

\textsuperscript{494} Momentariness is not explicitly mentioned in early Sarvāstivāda Abhidharma texts, but this position can quite safely be attributed to their authors; see Bronkhorst 1995.
necessity be non-present. Observation of a desire is therefore only possible if a non-present object (the desire) exists. The Sarvāstivādins concluded from this that past and future exist. This particular view, incidentally, is responsible for their name, Sarvāstivāda, the “position (vāda) according to which everything (sarva) exists (asti)”. Sarvāstivāda, as will be clear from this very brief presentation, made a major effort to rationalise its teachings, Theravāda did not. Sarvāstivāda played a major role in the tradition of debate that came to involve all schools of philosophy, whether Buddhist, Brahmanical, or Jaina; it seems even likely that the Sarvāstivādins were the first to adhere to this tradition of debate in India. Theravāda played no such role, and indeed left India before this tradition of debate had attained a prominent position.

The marginal role of Theravāda Buddhism is illustrated by one of the earliest surviving texts in India dedicated to criticising the positions of others. This text is the Kathāvatthu “Text dealing with disputes”, according to tradition composed 218 years after the death of the Buddha (Hinüber 1996: 70 f.), and belonging precisely to the Theravāda branch of Buddhism. It criticises in its oldest portions a position that we know was held by the Sarvāstivādins, mentioned earlier. An analysis of the criticism presented in the Kathāvatthu shows that its author had not understood, and perhaps had no knowledge of, the arguments used by the Sarvāstivādins to justify their position. The Sarvāstivādins held that past and future exist, and their argumentation, as we have seen, was built on their fundamental belief that no two mental events can simultaneously occur in one person. The author of the Kathāvatthu presents instead an argument that is totally nonsensical.⁴⁹⁵

The Kathāvatthu, then, is a text that criticises the position of others without being properly informed about it (at least in this case). No wonder that its uninformed criticism carried little weight. The Sarvāstivādins were not obliged to change their views as a result of the criticism expressed in this Theravāda text, and did not do so. Moreover, the Theravādins felt no need to develop their own views into a coherent whole.

All this takes us back to the question of writing. It may not be necessary to know writing in order to debate, or for producing a well-constructed argument, or for seeing the weakness in the position of someone else. However, to destroy the position of one’s opponent, one has to know that position. If the opponent belongs to a tradition altogether different from one’s own — as is the case in a confrontation between a Brahmin and a Buddhist — knowledge of the other’s texts is unlikely to be part of one’s own curriculum. In such cases the most obvious way of gaining access to the position and defensive arguments of one’s opponent is by studying the texts that the opponent himself has read. (Other ways are possible, but no doubt rare: according to legend, the Brahmanical thinker Kumārila had in his youth joined a Buddhist monastery in order to gain deep knowledge of the doctrines he was going to criticise; cp. Hulin 2001: 24.)

For much of the history of Indian philosophy there can be no doubt that the main participants in the ongoing debate read the writings of their opponents. Authors criticise each other and show considerable familiarity with the writings of their worst enemies. For this part of the history of Indian philosophy the importance of writing cannot be doubted.

To illustrate the extent to which at least certain philosophical authors were acquainted with the literature of their opponents, I refer to a passage in the Nyāyavārttika

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⁴⁹⁵ Bronkhorst 1993.
of Uddyotakara, a commentator who wrote around the year 600.\textsuperscript{496} In this passage
Uddyotakara criticises the Buddhist doctrine of No-Self (anātman). One of the arguments
he presents is that the Buddhists, by believing this, go against their own sacred texts. At
this point Uddyotakara cites a text which it is not possible to locate in the surviving
versions of Buddhist Sūtras. But apparently the cited passage was not well-known to the
Buddhists in Uddyotakara's time either, for he says: “Don't say that this is not Buddha
word; it occurs in the Sarvābhisamayasūtra.” Apparently Uddyotakara had made such
extensive searches in the sacred literature of his opponents that he had unearthed a
passage that few Buddhists knew.

We have to address the question whether classical Indian philosophy came about as a
result of acquaintance with writing. Is it possible that it would \textit{not} have come about
without it? Questions like these are difficult to answer. Most of the earliest surviving
philosophical texts present their own system and pay little explicit attention to other
philosophies. It seems safe to maintain that they had become interested in systematising
their own position and removing inconsistencies because they felt threatened by other
thinkers. But one can \textit{be criticised} by others without knowing the details of their
positions. What is more, one can \textit{criticise} the positions of others without knowing those
positions all that well.

We have seen that the \textit{Kathāvatthu} illustrates this. It criticises other positions, but
in the one case where we can check what it is doing we find that it had not understood the
position it criticised at all. Not seeing the inner coherence of the views it criticises, the
Theravāda tradition apparently did not feel the need to increase the coherence of its own,
as the Sarvāstivādins had done. There is a great temptation to conclude that the
Theravādins had no access to the texts of their opponents. This in its turn might be
interpreted to mean that they did not yet use writing at that period. But was the situation
different for the contemporary Sarvāstivādins?

Unfortunately this is far from clear. It appears that the Vaiśeṣika philosophy arose
under the influence of Sarvāstivāda thought,\textsuperscript{497} but it is not clear how much in-depth
knowledge of that Buddhist school was required in order to be familiar with its main
theoretical presuppositions; the \textit{Vaiśeṣikasūtra} (the oldest text of this school) may in any
case be too young to be of importance in this discussion. The same may be true of the
\textit{Nyāyasūtra}. The early Sarvāstivāda texts that have been preserved do not as a rule speak
of the positions of others. However, a Gāndhārī manuscript fragment from the first
century CE (which is being prepared for publication by Collett Cox) contains parts of a
polemical, non-Sarvāstivāda, Abhidharma text that criticises alternative positions, most
notably the Sarvāstivāda. Alternative views are also mentioned in the \textit{Mahāvibhāṣā}, a
voluminous commentary that may have been composed, in its earliest form, in the first
half of the second century CE. This text does not only mention the deviating opinions of
other Sarvāstivādins: rival schools of Buddhism receive coverage also, as do a variety of
non-Buddhist schools.\textsuperscript{498} Unfortunately it seems that the information we find in this text
about non-Buddhist schools is so sparse that no certain conclusions can be drawn about
the acquaintance of its authors with the texts of their non-Buddhist rivals. This question is

\textsuperscript{496} For details, see Bronkhorst 1996.
\textsuperscript{497} See § III.4.1, below,
\textsuperscript{498} Buswell & Jaini 1996: 110-111.
in need of further study as far as the Mahāvibhāṣā is concerned,
but it is clear that other early Sarvāstivāda texts, including the Abhidharmahṛdaya, the
Sanvukāṭābhidharmahṛdaya, and even Vasubandhu's more recent
Abhidharmakośabhāṣyā tell us very little about rival non-Buddhist schools. By
contrast, the text which is partially preserved in the so-called Spitzer manuscript (third
century CE at the latest) contains frequent references to ‘non-Buddhist literature and
topics, e.g., the Mantras, Brāhmaṇas and Upaniṣads, arthaśāstra, kāmasāstra, Rāmāyaṇa,
Mahābhārata, the kālās, etc., and notably to the non-Buddhist philosophical schools of
Sāmkhya and Vaiśeṣika’ (Franco 2000: 558 [53]; cp. 2004). Familiarity with the
doctrines of different schools is also attested in the Buddhacarita ‘Acts of the Buddha’ by
Āśvaghoṣa, a Buddhist author belonging to the first centuries of the Common Era. This
poem contains a description (and criticism) of the Sāmkhya philosophy that appears to be
well informed. It also contains indications that suggest its author was acquainted with
Vaiśeṣika. Regarding Āśvaghoṣa, Johnston observed (1936: II: xviii): ‘he had an
acquaintance, so wide that no parallel can be found to it among other Buddhist writers,
with all departments of Brahmanical learning, including some knowledge of the Veda and
ritual literature as well as mastery of all the sciences a kavi was expected to have
studied.’ However, this may not be evidence for the accessibility of all this learning to
non-Brahmins, but rather for the opposite, viz., that Āśvaghoṣa was born a Brahmin and
had been given a Brahmin's education; this is indeed what the Chinese tradition
maintains. For familiarity with Brahmanical philosophical learning on the part of a
Buddhist author we have to turn to Nāgārjuna, whose Vaidalyaparākāraṇa and
Vigrahavyāvartanī betray thorough knowledge of the Nyāyasūtra. All this information
about other schools in these works may not, however, be of much help, since it seems
unlikely that anyone would seriously maintain that the Mahāvibhāṣā and the poems of
Āśvaghoṣa, not to speak of the works of Nāgārjuna, were composed orally: with these
texts we have no doubt entered the age of literacy.

And yet, even in an age of literacy information may be difficult to obtain.
Qvarnström (1999: 172) paints the following depressing picture:

[T]here were no public libraries, no public centers of education or information.
Philosophical systems were, so to speak, private property. To learn something
about the ‘exoteric’ views of an opponent one might attend or participate in a
public debate (vāda).

This picture is no doubt too bleak. Hinüber (2001: 359), referring to Qvarnström’s
remarks, draws attention to the Vinaya of the Mūlasarvāstivādins, which stipulates that
when books are left by testament to the Buddhist order, the Buddhist books should be

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500 Willemen 1975.
501 Dessein 1999.
502 See the indexes in Abhidh-k-bh(Hi) and Abhidh-k(VP) VI; cp. Bronkhorst 1997.
504 Bronkhorst 2005.
Dragonetti 1995; Meuthrath 1999.
506 It is in this context interesting to recall that the (Mahā-)Vibhāṣā is familiar with the numerical
place-value system (Bronkhorst 1994).
kept and given to the library, whereas books belonging to other śāstras should be sold. This rule would make no sense if there were no readers who read books belonging to different philosophical and scientific traditions.

IIA.3.6. Conclusions

The conclusions to be drawn from the reflections above cannot but be disappointing. It may be that writing played a role in the composition of Pāṇini's grammar, but we don't really know. It may be that literacy, and access to the writings of thinkers belonging to different schools, made possible the intellectual revolution that created classical Indian philosophy, but once again, we cannot be sure. All we know is that the subsequent development of classical Indian philosophy depended upon access to written documents not only of the own school, but to those of others as well.

IIA.4. Sanskrit and the Veda

Brahmins, in their self-understanding, owed their special status to the fact that they knew and preserved the Veda, which includes numerous mantras that are supposed to be effective if correctly pronounced in the right circumstances. Their particular concern with the correct pronunciation of those mantras is responsible for their interest in phonetics, and for the composition of treatises dealing with this topic, either in general or focused on specific Vedic texts. The effectiveness of those mantras, furthermore, showed that these mantras, and the language of these mantras, had a close affinity with reality. Sanskrit and reality were, in their opinion, closely connected, and this is a theme that comes up again and again in Brahmanical thought.

This fundamental conviction found expression in a single encompassing vision, in which both the Sanskrit language and the Veda had their place. In this vision, Sanskrit was eternal, i.e., without beginning in time; other languages were at best corruptions of the only language that really existed, viz. Sanskrit. The Veda, too, was without beginning in time, and therefore without author. It needed no author, because the Veda was the pure expression of the Sanskrit language. Studying Sanskrit and studying the Veda were therefore two sides of the same coin. This issue will be taken up in the present chapter.

\[^{507}\text{Gilgit Manuscripts vol. III part 2, p. 143 l. 5-7: pustakānāṃ buddhavacanapustakā avibhajya cāturdīśāya bhikṣusamghāya dhāranakoṣṭhikāyām prakṣeptavyāḥ / bahīṣṭāstrapustakā bhikṣubhir vikṛtāḥ bhājayitavyāḥ /}\n
\[^{508}\text{The extent of the interaction between different schools of thought during the centuries preceding the Common Era is often underestimated; see Bronkhorst 2006.}\n
\[^{509}\text{Vincent Eltschinger (2013: 207-208, with references) points out that Dharmakīrti repeatedly ascribes to his Mīmāṃsaka opponent the idea that mantras yield their results due to a natural capacity (bhāvaśakti), an idea that does not appear to find expression in the extant Mīmāṃsā treatises. The absence of this specific term in the relevant treatises does not change the fact that the general idea would seem to fit Mīmāṃsā thought quite well, in spite of Eltschinger's hesitations.}\n
\[^{510}\text{Jim Holt (2012: 86) asks his readers to imagine a "series that has no beginning and no end, ... consisting of an infinite succession of copies of some book — say, the Bhagavad Gītā. Suppose that each book in the series is faithfully copied by a scribe, letter for letter, from the preceding}\]
IIA.4.1. The linguistic background of Brahmanism

Language has always been a major concern for Brahmanism, not least because of its inseparable connection with the Veda. Brahmans are expected to study and recite the Veda. Without doing so, they are in danger of losing their status and of becoming a Śūdra.

Scholars have observed that the general outlook of the Vedic Brāhmaṇas can be described as magical thought. They contain numerous identifications of or correlations between items that are, at first sight, unconnected, as when the god Viṣṇu is identified with the sacrifice, or the cow with breath. Certain identifications are based on the phonetic similarity of the words used to designate the items concerned. These identifications are based on the implicit conviction that language and reality are interconnected. The Vedic Brāhmaṇas do not explicitly state what precise procedure they follow. However, in most cases this procedure is relatively straightforward. Items designated by words that resemble each other are thought of as connected. These items can be of many kinds: concrete objects, abstract notions, actions, etc. All that counts is the resemblance between word forms.

By way of example, consider the following passage from the Aitareya Brāhmaṇa (2.1(6).1):

They (the gods who went upwards to heaven) obstructed (ayopayan) it (the way to heaven) by means of the sacrificial post (yūpa); in that they obstructed (ayopayan)

book in the series. Now, for each given copy of the Bhagavad Gita, the text is fully explained by the text of the preceding copy, from which it has been transcribed. But why should the whole series of books, extending back infinitely far in time, be copies of the Bhagavad Gita? Why not copies of some other book — Don Quixote, say, or Paradise Lost? Why, for that matter, should there be any book at all? Transferred to the Veda, which has been repeated since beginningless time, this implies that the content of the Veda requires an explanation that goes beyond the fact that it has been (orally) copied and recopied forever. This explanation is that pure speech finds expression in the Veda, and in the Veda alone.

Kane, HistDh II/I: 107-108.

Manu 2.168.

Witzel 1979; Oldenberg 1919.

Oldenberg 1919: 110 ff. On these identifications, see further Renou 1946; Smith 1989: 30 ff.

Correlations are not limited to Vedic India. Michael Witzel (2012: 290-291), while discussing the great divide between the two mythological regions he calls Laurasia and Gondwana, points out: “The use of correlations is ... a general human trait, nevertheless the way they are employed and the use they are put to differ in the two regions. For example, African sorcery lays greater stress on objects used, ‘fetishes’, as seen in Caribbean Voodoo. Little care is given to the actual wording employed in sorcery. ... Conversely, Laurasian magic prominently employs the power of the word, the magical formulas establishing correlations, along with pertinent actions, whether in the Trobriand Islands, in India, with the Austronesian Ami in Taiwan, or in ancient Japan.” See also p. 429: “Where we can observe Laurasian shamanic and priestly tradition, such as among the traditional Siberian and Nepalese shaman, the Trobriand Islanders, the Ami priests of aboriginal Taiwan, and the Vedic Indian Brahmans, it puts considerable, even extraordinary stress on the power of speech.”

Numerous examples can be found in Deeg 1995.
by means of the post (yūpa), that is why the post has its name (lit. that is the yūpa-
ship of the yūpa).\textsuperscript{517}

Or the following one, from the \textit{Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa} (3.11.8.7-8):

Prajāpati (the creator god) did not know how to give the sacrificial fee (dakṣinā).
He put it in his right hand (dakṣinaḥ). He took it, speaking the ritual formula: ‘For
fitness (dakṣa) I take you, the sacrificial fee (dakṣinā).’ — Therefore he became fit
(adakṣata). The one who \textit{knowing thus} receives the sacrificial fee (dakṣinā),
becomes fit (dakṣate).\textsuperscript{518}

A third example comes from the \textit{Taittirīya Saṃhitā} (1.7.4.6):

"You are the grass-bundle (vedā), you are gain; may I gain", he says. By the grass-
bundle the gods won (avindanta) the desirable wealth of the Asuras; that is that
what makes the vedā the ‘vedā’.\textsuperscript{519}

Passages like these display more than innocent word play. They are believed to reveal
hidden links, and their knowledge is thought to bring various kinds of benefit. A number of Vedic texts provide this knowledge by bringing these links to light.

In Pāṇini’s \textit{Aṣṭādhyāyī} and Yāska’s \textit{Nirukta} we witness efforts that were made in
late-Vedic times to systematize the Vedic conviction that similarities in the realm of
words hide connections. This means that similar words and their meanings are connected.
Systematizing this belief almost inevitably leads to a search for minimal semantic
entities, minimal meaning bearers. This search succeeded to a considerable extent in the
discipline of Grammar (vyākaraṇa), which shows how minimal meaning bearers jointly
give rise to ‘regular’ word formations. Beyond the limits of Grammar, Etymology
(nirukta/nirvacana) did its best, but never succeeded in systematically identifying
minimal meaning bearers. Yāska could not say that there were none, because this would
go against the Vedic conviction that was his point of departure. In the end, he could do no
more than offer a more or less satisfactory method to find the meanings of unknown
words. He calls Etymology the ‘complement of Grammar’ (Nir 1.15: \textit{tad idam
vidyāsthānam vyākaranasya kārtsnyam}). Both Etymology and Grammar are elaborations
of the magical belief concerning the relation between words and things that is
omnipresent in Vedic literature.

A very simple (and simplified) example will illustrates how Pāṇini’s grammar
‘works’. To express he/she/it is in Sanskrit, the semantic elements that have to find
expression are ‘being’, ‘agent’, ‘third person singular’ and ‘present tense’. ‘Being’ gives
rise to bhū, ‘agent’ to \textit{lat}, which is replaced by \textit{ti} in order to express ‘third person
singular’: bhū + ti. For various reasons an element \textit{a} is then inserted between these two

\textsuperscript{517} AitBr 2.1.1: \textit{tam vai yūpenaivāyopayaṁ tam yad yūpenaivāyopayaṁ tad yūpasya yūpatvaṁ.}

\textsuperscript{518} TaitBr 3.11.8.7-8: \textit{sa vai tam eva nāвидnāt/ yasmai tāṃ dakṣinām aneśyat/ tāṃ svāyaiva
hastāya dakṣināyānayat/ tāṃ prayagṛhṇā/ dakṣāya tvā dakṣinām pratīgrhāṇāmśti/ so 'dakṣata
dakṣinām pratīgrhāya/ dakṣate ha vai dakṣinām pratīgrhāya/ ya evaṁ veda iti/} Tr. Witzel 1979: 13.

\textsuperscript{519} TaitS 1.7.4.6: \textit{vedo 'si vittir asi vedyeyty āha/ vedena vai devā asurānām vittaṁ vedyam
avindanta/ tad vedaśya vedaśvatvam.} Tr. Lubin forthcoming a.
(bhū + a + ti), and the vowel ā of bhū is reinforced so as to become o: bho + a + ti. A phonetic rule, finally, replaces o of bho with av, resulting in bhavati. The derivation of this word passes therefore through the following stages:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{bhū} \\
\text{bhū + laṭ} \\
\text{bhū + ti} \\
\text{bhū + a + ti} \\
\text{bho + a + ti} \\
\text{bhav + a + ti}
\end{align*}
\]

Each preceding stage in this derivation determines what is going to be the next one.

This is not always the case. Consider the form bhavatu, which is an imperative and expresses the meaning he/she/it must be. Its derivation is similar to that of bhavati, but adds one more stage:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{bhū} \\
\text{bhū + loṭ} \\
\text{bhū + ti} \\
\text{bhū + a + ti} \\
\text{bho + a + ti} \\
\text{bhav + a + ti} \\
\text{bhav + a + tu}
\end{align*}
\]

The step from bhavati to bhavatu, i.e., the replacement of i by u (or ti by tu) depends on the element loṭ that was present in the second stage, but has meanwhile disappeared. Here, therefore, the final stage is not determined by the immediately preceding one.

Whatever the details, it is not difficult to see how Grammar makes sense against the background of Vedic thought in general. It shows the formation of correct words out of ultimate meaning bearers. It is because of this relationship between words and the ultimate meaning bearers that words can be linked to each other, and to items in the external world, in the manner that is taken for granted in Vedic thought.

IIA.4.2. The eternal nature of Sanskrit

An innovation introduced by the new Brahmanism is the belief that the Sanskrit language — i.e., its words and sounds — are eternal, and therefore without beginning and end. Patañjali the grammarian did so, but he was not the first. Already Kātyāyana held that belief, as is clear from vārttikas such as P. 1.1.56 vt. 12: anupapamṇam sthāṇyādeśatvam nityatvāt. There is, on the other hand, no indication that Pāṇini had accepted it. Nor had Yāska, who uses the word nitya a few times in his Nirukta, but never in the sense ‘eternal’.\(^{520}\) Assuming, for simplicity’s sake, that all Brahmans adopted this new

\(^{520}\) See Bronkhorst 1996a: 1984. Deshpande (1985) thinks that “the notion of the Divine Eternal Sanskrit was not the creation of the Sanskrit grammarians”; he rather thinks that “this notion in its various forms goes back to ancient Vedic texts” (p. 146). This does not change the fact that the transition from Pāṇini and Yāska to Kātyāyana and Patañjali is not altogether continuous.
conviction of the eternality of words more or less simultaneously, and considering that Yāska is almost certainly more recent than Pāṇini, this would have happened at some time between Yāska and Kātyāyana.

It is possible that the oldest version of the Mīmāṁsāsūtra was not yet acquainted with the notion of eternal words. Frauwallner (1961: 121 [319]) thought that the sūtras that make that particular claim (MīmŚū 1.1.6-23) are later insertions into the text. This, if correct, would mean that Mīmāṁsā, the school of Vedic interpretation, had begun its existence already before Kātyāyana and Patañjali. As will be explained below, the belief in the eternality of words, and of the Veda, is a corner stone of classical Mīmāṁsā, so much so that it is hard to imagine what the earlier form of Mīmāṁsā, which presumably existed before the time of Kātyāyana and Patañjali, may have looked like.

The new belief in the eternality of words had consequences for Grammar, and these consequences are visible in the work of Patañjali (and to a lesser extent in the work of Kātyāyana, who in this respect appears to agree with him). This belief pulled the rug from underneath the efforts of Pāṇini, Yāska and no doubt others. No longer is Grammar ultimately motivated by the search for minimal meaning bearers that help to explain the hidden links that connect words and their meanings, following a fundamental tenet of Vedic thought. No longer is language the outcome of the dynamic interaction of minimal phonetic elements expressive of minimal meanings. On the contrary, for Patañjali words are eternal ‘entities’ with meanings that have possessed from all eternity. The parts of words that join up and are modified or replaced one by one have no place in Patañjali’s scheme of things. The reality behind the addition and substitution of elements in a word is, for him, that whole words are replaced by whole words. In other words, for Patañjali the basic elements of Pāṇini’s Grammar have lost their independence. What is more, Patañjali reduces the derivational process to a mental process: the knowledge of one word followed by the knowledge of another.

This difference between Patañjali and his predecessors is subtle, but has radical consequences. For one thing, it affects Patañjali’s understanding of the text of Pāṇini’s Grammar. Consider the following. Pāṇini used a number of terms to indicate the optional use of certain formations. The particle vā indicated that the use of a particular form was to be preferred; vibhāṣā indicated the opposite, viz., that the resulting form should rather not be used; and anyatarasyām showed equal preference for two possible forms. Patañjali shows no awareness of this distinction. This might be explained, and has been explained, by the assumption that Patañjali no longer knew the correct interpretation of these terms, that the correct understanding of Pāṇini’s Aṣṭādhyāyī had been lost by his time. However, nothing is less certain. Even if Patañjali was aware of the distinction between these three particles, his different vision of the Sanskrit language had no place

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521 Bronkhorst 1984.
522 They were not without consequences for the interpretation of the Veda either: the aitihāsika ‘historical’ way of interpreting, still known to the Nirukta, disappears thereafter from the records; see Pollok 1990: 331.
523 Deshpande (1997: 100) points out that “Kātyāyana … is different from Pāṇini in his concerns, and yet does not have the developed terminology of Patañjali to refer to this distinction in linguistic ontology (i.e., between fixed true sounds and uttered sounds, JB).”
524 Mahā-bh I p. 75 1.8-14, on P. 1.1.20 vt. 5. More will be said about Patañjali’s interpretation of the derivational process in § III.3.2, below.
525 Kiparsky 1979.
526 On the question whether Patañjali knew the original text of the Aṣṭādhyāyī, see Appendix VII.
for more or less preferred words. His language consisted of correct words, and excluded incorrect words. Correct words are not preferred to one another; they are all equally correct. Certain correct words may not be used very often. Following the lead of Kātyāyana’s vārttikas, Patañjali discusses four rarely used words in particular: āsā ‘you dwelt’, tera ‘you crossed’, cakra ‘you made’, peca ‘you cooked’. His point is that these words may be rare, but there is no doubt about their correct grammatical formation and therefore about their meaning. And as it so happens, these words are used in some Vedic texts. Other correct words, Patañjali points out, are not used among cultured Brahmins but are used by foreigners. More recent Brahmanical thinkers, most notably the Mimāṃsakas, the professional interpreters of Vedic texts, agree with Patañjali, and have to confront the question what meaning to ascribe to such words. Can one simply accept the meaning in which foreigners use these words, or should one try to arrive at their meaning by strictly Brahmanical means, such as Etymology? Whatever the answer to this question, it is clear that correct words, though eternal, are not necessarily all used even by educated Brahmins. Some may be used in other worlds, and some may even ‘survive’ among foreigners.

The belief that words are eternal is also not without repercussions on the question what words refer to, for eternal words must refer to eternal things. Most words, or at any rate nouns, can be used to refer to two ‘things’: an individual or a general notion. Patañjali is aware of this double potential of many nouns, and uses the expressions form (aṅkṛti) and substance (dravya) to distinguish between the two. Since the meaning of words has to be eternal, which of these two has to be considered their ‘real’ meaning? Patañjali dedicates a passage to this question, and comes to the conclusion that “the word refers to that which we look upon as eternal.”

IIA.4.3. New ideas about Sanskrit and the Veda

The belief that the Sanskrit language, or more specifically its words, are eternal and therefore without beginning finds expression, perhaps for the first time, in the works of the grammarians Kātyāyana and Patañjali. The words of the Sanskrit language have always been there, and constitute the linguistic counterparts of what there is in the world. This belief gives rise to some interesting questions. Does it mean that we can derive reliable information about the world from the Sanskrit language? The answer, as we will see, is yes. We will consider four ways in which the Sanskrit language and reality corresponded to each other, at least according to some.

Categories of words and categories of things

Can we conclude from the different kinds of words that exist what kinds of things there are in the world? For example: Can we transfer linguistic categories to the real world?

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527 This is, in essence, also the point of Kiparsky 2012.
528 Mahā-bh I p. 8 l. 23 – p. 10 l. 3.
529 Mahā-bh I p. 7 l. 8-25.
530 We will discuss the effects of this belief on the interpretation of grammar in § III.3.2, below.
And can we conclude from the presence of a word in Sanskrit that the corresponding object exists?

Many Brahmanical thinkers of the time would give an affirmative answer to these last two questions. With regard to the parallelism between linguistic categories and the real world, they appear to have thought of such a parallelism as completely self-evident. This is the reason why there do not seem to be any passages in their classical works that discuss this issue explicitly.

Consider the following observation in Patañjali’s Mahābhāṣya:

Words relate in three ways to their objects: There are words that relate to universals (jātiśabda), there are words that relate to qualities (gunaśabda), and there are words that relate to actions (kriyāśabda).

These three kinds of words are what we would call nouns, adjectives, and verbs. Elsewhere in his Mahābhāṣya Patañjali points out that words that relate to universals designate both universals and individuals:

A word that relates to a universal designates both a substance and a universal.

Patañjali’s threefold division of words — which was certainly not meant to be exhaustive — is later used by the Vaiśeṣika school of philosophy to develop an ontology in which the three corresponding entities — substances, qualities and actions — constitute the three fundamental categories. This school of thought exerted a profound influence on other schools, notably Nyāya, and based its very structure on the belief in the parallelism between words and things. A more detailed discussion of this school will be found in § III.4.1, below.

Words

The next question is: If words correspond to things, what can we learn from these words about the world? Can we, for example, conclude from the existence of a word that the object it denotes exists, too? At first sight this question may look bizarre. Can we derive from the existence of the word ‘Martian’ in English that there are Martians? Or from the word ‘angel’ that angels exist?

Comparison with the English words ‘Martian’ and ‘angel’ exposes us to the danger of thinking of Sanskrit as just another language, different from but at the same time comparable to any of the innumerable languages of this world. This is not the way Brahmanical thinkers thought about it. For them, Sanskrit was the only real language, beginningless and not created by human beings. Moreover, it was the language of the Veda, a beginningless body of literature. New words designating imaginary entities might not exist in this language. It is therefore conceivable that there were Brahmanical thinkers who took it for granted that the existence of a Sanskrit word guaranteed the existence of the corresponding item. But did they actually do so?

531 Mahā-bh I p. 20 l. 8-9: trayī ca śabdānām pravrttiḥ/ jātiśabdā guṇaśabdāḥ kriyāśabdāḥ iti./
532 Mahā-bh I p. 230 l. 17: jātiśabdena hi dravyam apy abhidhāyate jātr āpt.
A passage from the Nyāyavārttika, a work composed in northwestern India presumably in the sixth or seventh century CE, shows that its author Uddyotakara did so, at least for certain words. This passage deals with the existence of the self, and expects from those who use that word to specify what it refers to. This challenge applies most particularly to those who deny the existence of the self: they, too, use the word, so they, too, must specify what it refers to. The passage reads:533

Here, to begin with [one must say] that the two (sic!) words (pada) ‘the soul does not exist’ (na asti ātmā) contradict [each other]: the word ‘soul’ (ātmā), [even when placed] in syntactic agreement with the words ‘does not exist’ (na asti), does not communicate the non-existence of the soul. For with the word ‘soul’, one expresses [its] existence, and with ‘does not exist’, its negation; the [very] thing denied in one place appears in the other. For example, the word ‘pot’, in syntactic agreement with ‘is not [there]’ (na asti), cannot communicate the non-existence of the pot; rather, it denies [its presence] in a particular place or at a particular time. [The sentence] ‘the pot is not’ (nāsti ghataḥ) denies [its presence] in a particular place, [as in the example] ‘it is not in the house’; or it denies [its presence] at a particular time, [as in the examples] ‘it is not [there] now’, ‘it was not [there] before’, ‘it will not be [there] later’. None of these negations are possible for someone who does not accept the existence of the pot. Likewise, [in the sentence] ‘the soul does not exist’, is the soul denied with respect to a particular place or with respect to a particular time?

Uddyotakara continues:534

He who denies the soul [altogether] must specify the object of the word ‘soul’.

Indeed, we do not see a word without an object.

We can be sure that Uddyotakara was not the only Naiyāyika who believed that there is a perfect correspondence between words and things. A related and relatively secondary question was how and why it is like that. Vātsyāyana’s Nyāyabhāṣya, which may belong to the second half of fifth century CE,535 presents us with two answers to this question. According to the first answer, words are a means of inference; Vātsyāyana rejects this answer, but not without first describing it:

The word is a means of inference; it is not a distinct means of knowledge. –Why? Because the object of a word is inferred. – How so? Because it is not apprehended

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533 NV introducing 3.1.1 (p. 699 l. 1 ff.): tatra nāsty ātmeti pade tāvad vyāhanyete, nāstiśabdasmāṇāṁdhikaraṇo 'yam ātmasabdāś nātmānā 'sattvam pratipādayati. kim kāraṇam? ātmeti sattvam abhidhiyate, nāstīti tasya pratipādehā, yac ca yatra pratipādehāyate tat tasmād anyatratā, yathā nāstīnā samāṇāḥdikaraṇo ghaṭāśabdo na ghaṭābhāvam pratipādayitum śaknoti, api tu deśākālaviṣeṇe pratipādehāti. nāstītī ghaṭa iti deśākālaviseṇe vā pratipādehā gehe nāstītī, kālaviṣeṇe vā pratipādehā idānim nāstītī prān nāstītī uḍrāvaḥ nāstītī, sarvaś cāyam pratipādehā nāḥbhūyapagataghaṭasattvasya yuktaḥ. tathā nāstī ātmeti kim ayam deśākālaviseṇe pratiśālehe atha kālaviṣeṇe iti.

534 NV p. 701 l. 5-6: ātmapi pratiśālehaṇ ca kurvāṇenātmāśabdaḥ sa viśayo vaktavyaḥ. na hy ekāṃ padaṁ nirarthakaṁ paśyāmaḥ.

by means of perception. A sign-possessing object, though unapprehended, comes to be known through a knowledge of the sign; it follows that [the sign] is a means of inference. Likewise, an object, though unapprehended, comes to be known through a knowledge of the word by which it is designated. Therefore, the word is a means of inference. … There is also the following reason: when a means of knowledge is distinct, apprehension involves two distinct processes. For apprehension takes place one way in the case of inference and another way in the case of analogy. … But in the case of word and inference, apprehension does not involve two processes. The process involved in inference is the same as the process involved in word. Since there is no difference, the word is a means of inference. … One grasps an object through verbal knowledge when the relation between a word and the object connected to it is well known, just as one grasps an object through inferential knowledge when the relation between an inferential sign and the object possessing the sign is well known.\(^{536}\)

Vātsyāyana himself has a different answer:

> It is not because of words on their own that one believes in the existence of imperceptible objects such as ‘heaven’, ‘the Apsarases’, ‘the Northern Kurus’, ‘the seven continents’, ‘the ocean’, or ‘the shape of the world’; rather, one believes in their existence because they have been spoken of by trustworthy people. Otherwise one would not believe in them. Inference, however, is not like this.\(^{537}\)

This does not prevent Vātsyāyana from stating:\(^{538}\) “There are as many naming words as there are things.”

There are reasons to think that there were Mīmāṃsākās who believed that the mere existence of a word guarantees the existence of the item denoted.\(^{539}\) Their position is criticized in Uddyotakara’s Nyāyavārttika on sūtra 1.1.7. This sūtra introduces the notion of reliable-teaching (āpta-upadeśa). The rules of Sanskrit grammar allow of two ways to


\(^{537}\) NBh on 2.1.52, (J) p. 134-135, (TA) p. 536: svargaḥ apsarasaḥ uttarah kuravaḥ sapta dvīpāḥ samudro lokasanniveśa ity evamāder apratyakṣasyārthasya na śabdamārāt pratayah, kim tarhi? āptair ayam uktaḥ śaśa ity atah sampratayah, viparyayena sampratayābhavāt. na tv evam anumānam iti.

\(^{538}\) NBh 1.1.4 (p. 109): yāvadartham vai nāmadheyasabdāḥ. Note that Vātsyāyana, following the sūtra, does not maintain that all cognition is expressible in words.

\(^{539}\) More recent thinkers refer to Mīmāṃsā as vākyaśāstra, and therefore only concerned with sentences. The first to do so may be Mukula Bhaṭṭa in the ninth or tenth century (David 2014: 2 n. 3; Venugopalan 2005: 218).
analyze this compound: ‘teaching by a reliable person’ or ‘teaching that is reliable’. The *Nyāyabhāṣya* opts for the former interpretation, but Uddyotakara’s *Nyāyavārttika* introduces an opponent who disagrees, for the following reason:

[If we only accept teaching by a reliable person,] there would be no teaching concerning such entities as *svarga, apūrva* and *devatā*, because these things are beyond the senses. If reliability is the direct perception of a thing, there would be no discourse informing us about such entities as *svarga, apūrva* and *devatā*, since no one can see them. For this reason it is appropriate [to analyze the compound] as “teaching that is reliable” rather than as “teaching by a reliable person”.

Uddyotakara rejects this position, but it is possible to identify those who held it. The distinction between ‘teaching that is reliable’ and ‘teaching by a reliable person’ must be understood in the light of the belief that the Veda has no author. The Veda, according to those who held this belief, contains reliable teaching, but is not the teaching by one or more reliable persons: it is authorless. The belief in the authorlessness of the Veda is characteristic of Mīmāṁsā, the school of Vedic interpretation. This suggests that Uddyotakara’s opponent is a Mīmāṁsaka.

This impression is confirmed by the presence of *apūrva* in the list of items enumerated. I leave this term untranslated, primarily because there is no simple English term that corresponds to it. *Apūrva* is a technical term of Mīmāṁsā, which designates an Unseen Effect (a term *literally means ‘unprecedented’) responsible for the future outcome of sacrificial activity.

There is one further passage informing us of the belief that the existence of a word guarantees the existence of the corresponding entity. It is a verse in Bhartṛhari’s *Vākyapadīya* (2.119), which reads:

They say that the characteristic of what is to be conveyed is that all words have things corresponding to them; this applies to words such as ‘cow’ as much as to the words *apūrva*, ‘deity’ and ‘heaven’.

The same examples here as in Uddyotakara’s *Nyāyavārttika* confirm that the same thinkers are referred to, presumably Mīmāṁsakas.

Bhartṛhari’s commentary on the *Mahābhāṣya*, too, has something to say about the three items *apūrva*, ‘deity’ and ‘heaven’:

Or rather, the perception of a thing is the means by which we are able to infer that the [corresponding] word exists, because there is nothing that has no word [to denote it]. *Just as the words ‘heaven’, *apūrva*, and ‘deity’, when perceived, enable us to infer that things that are absolutely imperceptible exist, in the same way, does*

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540 NV 1.1.7 (p. 174): svargāpūrvadevatādiśūpadēśo na prāpnoti atindriyatvāt, yadi sāksātkaraṇam arthasyāptih, svargāpūrvadevatādīn na kaścit paśyātītī tatpratipādako vyavahāro na syāt, tasmaḥ āptaś cāśāv upadeśaṁ ceti yuktaṁ, nāptasyopadeśaṁ iti.

541 I borrow this expression from Benson 2010: 36.

542 Vkp 2.119: asty arthaḥ sarvaśabdānām iti prayāyyalakṣaṇam/ apūrvadevatāsvargaiḥ samam āhur gavādiṣu/
This passage, too, takes it for granted that the three entities ‘heaven’, ‘deity’ and *apūrva* must exist because the words for them exist.

Then there is the Buddhist thinker Bhavya, who in his *Madhyamakahṛdayakārikā* 9.5 attributes to Mīmāṃsākās the view that the existence of objects such as heaven and *apūrva* are known on the basis of the Veda.\(^{544}\)

There is, finally, a passage that explicitly criticizes the Mīmāṃsā school of thought for maintaining that a word, say ‘cow’, is a valid means of cognition for knowing the universal concerned (in this case ‘cowness’). This passage occurs in the *Tattvopaplavasiṃha* of Jayārāsi Bhaṭṭa, a sceptical author belonging to the eighth century. Arguing that a valid means of knowledge should bring about apprehension of something not apprehended before, he claims that individual words cannot bring about such apprehension.\(^{545}\)

The preceding passages inform us about an early Mīmāṃsā position. The Mīmāṃsākās were however not the only ones to believe in the close relationship between words and things. A passage from the *Yuktidīpikā*, a Sāmkhya text, is interesting in this respect. It states that there are two kinds of words, some created by the supreme seer, i.e. Kapila, and based on the things themselves; other words have been given, presumably by more recent users of Sanskrit, on the basis of the external appearance of the things denoted. Informed users have no need for words that have not been created by the supreme seer. The passage reads.\(^{546}\)

> A name is a word meant to convey the thing named. It is of two kinds: based on the thing itself and based on its shape.

> From among these two, a name based on the thing itself depends on the activity of the thing by virtue of the thing itself. Following the thing as it resides in the own form of the thing consisting of its universal etc., it convey the thing named as it really is. Examples are ‘cooker’ (*pācaka*) and ‘cutter’ (*lāvaka*).

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544 Kawasaki 1977: 6-7; Lindner 2001: 92: *ayantākṣaparakṣe hi pratipattih katham bhavet/ adṛṣṭālingasambandhe svargāpūrvādivastumi/


546 YD (WM) p. 7 l. 16-27 (cf. Łuczyszyna forthcoming): *samjñipratyāyānārthaḥ śabdaḥ samjñā/ sā ca dvividhā/ arthanibandhanā svarūpanibandhanā ca/ tatrārthanibandhanārthavasārthakriyāpeksā/ jātyādyarthasvarūpāntarbhāvī yathārthas tathābhāvata evam saṃjñinām pratīyayati/ tadyaṭā pācako lāvakaḥ iti/ svarūpanibandhanā punah samjñipratyāyānām satōvāpayetvām ārthāṃ svarūpamāṇrām ārthāṃ svarūpamāṇrāmadhyamānām svarūpanibandhanām prativṛttāṇām śabdaḥ/ tadyāṭā prādiḥyante 'tra vikārā iti pradhānām/ puri śete iti puruṣa ityādī/ tanmatānusārāṇām apy ācāryāṇām tābhir eva saṃvyavahārān nāstī apūrvasamjñāvīdhiḥānām praty ādārah/
A name based on the shape of a thing, on the other hand, is merely a means to convey the thing named and facilitates only the communication of its shape without conveying the meaning of its parts; it conveys the thing named by virtue of a convention even if the thing named is not really like that. Examples are: ‘elephant-ear’ (gajakarna; name of a spirit) and ‘horse-ear’ (aśvakarna; name of a tree).

A word based on the shape of a thing does not belong to [the vocabulary of] the revered supreme seer who through effort creates the names of all essences after having grasped their own form by means of his seer’s knowledge, as in pradhāna — which is thus called because all modifications are placed in it (pradhiyante ‘tra vikārāḥ) —, puruṣa — thus called because it rests in the body (puri šete) — and elsewhere. Also teachers who follow his views have no regard for the creation of new names, because they converse by means of those names only.

Since most of the passages considered inform us about a Mīmāṃsā position, one would expect to find the same also in Śabara’s Mīmāṃsābhāṣya. Interestingly, one does not. Indeed, there are reasons to think that Mīmāṃsā had abandoned this position at the time of Śabara. For Śabara’s commentary does express views about the three entities just considered — ‘heaven’, apūrva and ‘deity’ — but rather than maintaining that the existence of these three is vouchsafed by the words that designate them, Śabara comes close to denying that two of them — ‘heaven’ and ‘deity’ — exist at all.547 Regarding the ‘Unseen Effect’ (apūrva), Śabara does not deny its existence. But far from claiming that it must exist because there is a word for it, he tries to prove its existence by giving other reasons.548

The end of Śabara’s passage on deities may reveal the reason why he abandoned the belief that the objects denoted by words of the Sanskrit language must necessarily exist. It refers several times to the ‘attendants’ of the deity, and there can be little doubt that temple priests are meant.549 Śabara, like so many orthodox Brahmins in his time and later, was very critical of temple priests, and of the worship of gods they orchestrated. His criticism takes the form of a denial of the very existence of the deities that the temple priests are supposed to serve. This, however, was only possible by way of abandoning a belief that had been part of Mīmāṃsā thought presumably until his day.550

Mīmāṃsā, then, abandoned the belief that there is a perfect correspondence between words and things. The passages considered from Uddyotakara’s Nyāyavārttika and Bhrātrhari’s Vākyapadīya strongly suggest that this belief had so far been part of it. We know, moreover, that there had been Mīmāṃsā treatises before Śabara composed his monumental Mīmāṃsābhāṣya. We know from Jayanta Bhatta’s Nyāyamāṇjarī that this author was still aware, in the ninth century,551 of ‘old Mīmāṃsakas’ (vyddhamīmāṃsaka)

547 Śabara proposes to understand ‘heaven’ (svarga) in the sense ‘happiness’ or ‘delight’ (prūti; on sūtra 4.3.15, p. 72 l. 6-7; and on sūtra 6.1.2, p. 179 l. 11). Dharmakīrti takes him to task for this in his Pramāṇavārttika 1.320 (see Eltschinger et al. 2012: 49 ff.)
548 Śabara’s Mīmāṃsābhāṣya on sūtra 2.1.5, p. 358 l. 16 - p. 373 l. 1 & p. 377 l. 1-7.
550 This did not free Mīmāṃsakas from the task of distinguishing between deities where the details of ritual required this; see Yoshimizu 2014.
551 For the date, see Potter 1977: 341-342.
who held opinions different from those of the ‘followers of Śabara’ (śābara).552 Unfortunately, none of their works have survived. However, a few texts belonging to other schools criticize this belief, as we have seen, and they do so in a manner that reveals that the belief was held — or had been held — by Mīmāṃsakas. Presumably this belief once found expression in the texts that are now lost.553

This conclusion is confirmed by a discussion at the beginning of the Śabara’s Mīmāṃsābhaṣya. The discussion concerns the meaning of the word dharma, a crucial term in Mīmāṃsā. Based on what ground do we have knowledge of dharma? Three sūtras (1.1.3-5) deal with this issue, and quite exceptionally, Śabara provides two altogether different commentaries on them. The first commentary is short, and amounts to this that the word (i.e., the word dharma) is the ground on which the knowledge of dharma is based. The second commentary is long, and has been taken from a commentator about whom we know no more than that Śabara calls him Vṛttikāra (‘commentator’). It seems safe to think that the first commentary was the traditional one. The second commentary, the one attributed to the Vṛttikāra takes on all sorts of new ideas, and strays considerably from the sūtras it is supposed to explain. It contains a number of remarks that are of interest in the present context.

Consider first the presumably traditional explanation of the sūtras. Śabara points out, under sūtra 1.1.4, that perception (pratyakṣa) cannot be the ground on which our knowledge of dharma is based. Introducing sūtra 1.1.5, he then adds that inference (anumāna), analogy (upamāna), presumption (arthāpatti) and absence (abhāva) cannot be its cause either, because these are preceded by perception. In his (traditional) comments on that sūtra he tells us what its ground is:554 “The eternal link of the word with its object is the ground on which that dharma, which is of the nature of the Agnihotra sacrifice and so on, unknown by means of perception etc., is based.” He explains this in the following lines.555

The eternal link of the word with its object is the ground on which that dharma, which is of the nature of the Agnihotra sacrifice and so on, unknown by means of perception etc., is based. For it is instruction. ‘Instruction’ (upadesa) is what we call the pronouncement of specific words. And this knowledge does not go wrong. For this knowledge, once arisen, does not change into its opposite. And of knowledge that, once arisen, does not change into its opposite one cannot say “it is not like this”, “it is not as it is known”, “it is as it is not known”. One would have in that case one thing in one’s mind, and something else in one’s speech. From


553 On the strict atheism of Mīmāṃsā that turns out not to be all that strict, see Bronkhorst 2009a: §2; Freschi 2012: 7-8.

554 Frauwallner 1968: 24 I. 5-6: autpattikaḥ śabdasyārthena sambandhas tasya agnihotradiśākṣanasya dharmsya nimitam pratyakṣādibhir anavagatasya.

555 Frauwallner 1968: 24 I. 7-14: upadeso hi bhavati. upadesa iti viśiṣṭasya śabdasya uccāraṇam. avyatirekaḥ ca bhavati tasya jñāṇasya. na hi tad utpannaṁ jñāṇam viparyeti. yac ca nāma jñāṇam utpannaṁ na viparyeti. na tac chakya te vaktum “naitad evam” iti. “yathā vijñāyate, na tathā bhavati”; “yathaitan na vijñāyate, tathaitat” iti. anyad asya hṛdaye, anyad vāci svāt. evaṁ vadato viruddham idam avagamyate “asti nāsti ca” iti. tasmāt tat pramāṇam, anapekṣātvāt. na hy evaṁ sati pratyayāntaram apekṣātavyam puruṣāntaram vā.
someone who speaks like that one would learn contradictory things, viz., “it is” and “it is not”. It is therefore a means of cognition, because it is independent. For, such being the case, no other knowledge will be required, nor another person.

In other words, on the basis of the word dharma we know that dharma exists.

The second commentary on sūtras 1.1.3-5 — the so-called Vṛttikāra-grantha, which Śābara quotes from an earlier commentator — is harder to interpret with confidence. On the link between words and things the Vṛttikāra says:556 “The link, not made by humans, of the word with its object is the [cause of] knowledge of the thing of the nature of the Agnihotra sacrifice and so on (i.e. of dharma) unknown by means of perception etc.” This, of course, is close to what Śābara had said. But it is not certain that it means quite the same thing, for the Vṛttikāra adds:557 “In this way there is correct knowledge that is of the nature of an injunction.” It appears that the knowledge directly derived from words here only concerns injunctions, not the existence of items for which there is a Sanskrit word. The Vṛttikāra adds a further explanation, as follows:558

If the link were to have been made by humans, the knowledge could be suspected of being incorrect, because it would then be the knowledge of someone else. But if the word itself speaks, how could it be incorrect? In that case the knowledge does not come from another person. When one says “he speaks”, this means “he makes known”, that he is the cause that [the thing] is known. If, because the word itself is the cause, one understands of one’s own, how could it state a falsehood of the form “it is not like that”?

I am not sure whether this throws further light on the Vṛttikāra’s intentions. The following lines do, and they show that injunctions and nothing else were on his mind. We read here, for example, “An injunction does not create a doubt of the kind ‘it may be the case, or not’”,559 contrasting the injunction with items of information one may obtain through other means of cognition. The passage concludes with an unambiguous remark: “It follows that the dharma is exclusively of the nature of injunctions.”560 Almost the same remark is repeated later on in the Vṛttikāra-grantha (“It follows that the dharma is exclusively of the nature of injunctions and nothing else”).561 The accent has clearly shifted from knowing dharma to knowing that dharma is exclusively of the nature of injunctions.

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556 Frauwallner 1968: 34 l. 15-17: apauruṣeyah śabdasyārthena sambandhas tasya agnihotrādilaksanasya arthatasya jñānām pratyakṣādibhir anavagamyamānasya.
557 Frauwallner 1968: 34 l. 17: tathā ca codanālaksanah samyakpratayā iti.
559 Frauwallner 1968: 34 l. 22-23: na cāsyā codanā “syād vā na vā” iti sāṃśayiṇaṃ pratyayam utpādayati.
560 Frauwallner 1968: 36 l. 4-5: tasmāc codanālaksanā eva dharmāh. The reason justifying this conclusion appears to be that any injunctions cannot possibly be contradicted by other means of knowledge, but the passage is obscure.
561 Frauwallner 1968: 48 l. 13-14: tasmāc codanālaksanā eva dharmo nānyalaksanāḥ. The reason here is that only injunctions are independent of other people and of other cognitions.
Interestingly, the question of deities and other unobservable entities comes up in the *Vṛttikāra-grantha*, too. But far from using words like *devatā* to prove that deities must exist, the *Vṛttikāra* uses them to prove that words have not been created by a name-giver.\(^{562}\) "In the case of unobserved things, such as deities and so on, the giving of a name is pointless and impossible." This line does not tell us whether the *Vṛttikāra* believed that deities exist, for deities cannot be observed, whether they exist or not.

In these passages the *Vṛttikāra* makes the impression of avoiding the issue to some extent. He yet engages in a discussion with thinkers — probably Cārvākas\(^{563}\) — who are explicit about their denial of the necessary existence of things for which there is a word. It is in this discussion that he is forced to clarify his position: "We do not designate the word ‘I’, when used, as ground for [the existence of] some other object, but rather the recognizing knowledge that is different from the word."\(^{564}\) In other words, we do not claim that the soul exists because there is a word, ‘I’, that refers to it. Here, then, the *Vṛttikāra* comes out in the open: he draws no ontological conclusions from the existence of words. We know that Śabara followed him in this.

We may conclude this section with the observation that many of the Brahmanical authors we have considered believed that there is a word for all things and vice-versa. This was also, perhaps primarily, the position of the Mīmāṃsakas who, however, abandoned it after some time, presumably out of antipathy against temple-priests, whose livelihood and source of income depended upon the belief that deities existed. Śabara denied the existence of deities and of heaven (in spite of the fact that Sanskrit has words for them); he may in this respect have followed the example of the ‘commentator’ (Vṛttikāra), part of whose commentary he cites in his own *Mīmāṃsābhāṣya*.

**Vedic sentences**

The close correspondence between Sanskrit and reality had given rise to the idea that we can learn something about the world from the words of Sanskrit. This idea was in the end abandoned, at least by some, and not wholeheartedly: remnants survived in the ontology of Vaiśeṣika and in some of the other passages considered above.

But if the words of the Sanskrit language cannot be accepted as reliable sources of information, what about its sentences? There is, of course, a big difference between words and sentences, or at any rate between words and most sentences. Sentences that we ourselves produce are not on the same level as words: the latter are beginningless and closely associated with reality; the former are new productions and can give expression to much beside truth, including plain lies. In other words, Sanskrit sentences cannot in general be looked upon as reliable sources of information. New Sanskrit sentences produced by speakers are as unreliable as new words produced by speakers.\(^{565}\)

However, there are certain Sanskrit sentences that are on the same level as individual words: they are the sentences of the Veda. These sentences, like Sanskrit

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562 Frauwallner 1968: 48 l. 7: *anupalabdhe ca devatādāv arthe ‘narthakaṃ sajñākarāṇam aśagyām ca*.

563 Greater Magadha p. 363 f.

564 Frauwallner 1968: 56 l. 7-9: *na vayam “aham” itīmāṃ śabdaṃ prayujyamānam anyasmin arthe hetutvena vyapadiśamah, kim tarhi śabdād vyatiriktaṃ prayabhiṣṭāpyavyayam*.

565 One could think of the four incorrect synonyms of *gauḥ* (‘cow’) that Patañjali enumerates: *gāvī, goni, gotā, gopotalikā*. All of these are incorrect, only *gauḥ* is correct.
words, have always been there and are as close to reality as individual Sanskrit words are. Or even more so. Those who no longer trusted the reliability of Sanskrit words as sources of information were left with only the Vedic sentences. Seen from the Brahmanical point of view, what was at stake was not the reliability of a body of text that had been preserved, but the reliability of the Sanskrit language, which found its natural expression in the Veda.

We find, then, that the task of providing reliable information about the world became the responsibility of the sentences of the Veda. Some authors state this explicitly. One is Vācaspatimiśra, who does so in his commentary on Śāṅkhyaśikā 5 while explaining the term ‘revelation’ (śruti):

Revelation is the knowledge of the meaning of sentences that is born from those sentences. And that knowledge is intrinsically valid because it is born from the Veda that has no author; it is correct because it is free from all doubt concerning possible shortcomings. In this manner also the knowledge born from traditional texts, the epics and Purāṇas, which are all based on the Veda, is correct. 566

But already Śabara had put the following words in the mouth of an opponent:

Even if words and their relations to objects are innate and permanent, nevertheless, dharma cannot be what is indicated by Vedic injunctions. For an injunction is a sentence. In the sentence “He who desires heaven should perform the Agnihotra sacrifice,” no single word (on its own) means that one attains heaven through the Agnihotra. One understands this only when the three words (agnihotram juhuyāt svargakāmah) have been spoken, and there does not exist a fourth word [denoting “heaven-through-Agnihotra”] distinct from this group of three words. 567

Many philosophers could subscribe to the general belief that Vedic sentences are reliable, but the specific task of figuring out what those sentences actually said belonged to Mīmāṁsā, the school of Vedic hermeneutics. This school developed a number of principles, some of which we will briefly discuss.

The point of departure is expressed as follows in Śabara’s Mīmāṁsābhāṣya:

It is a contradiction to say ‘the Vedic word speaks’ and ‘incorrectly’. When one says ‘it speaks’, this means ‘it makes known’, that it is the cause that a thing is known. 568

This general principle is fundamental, but only of limited use in determining what all the sentences that constitute the Veda actually say. Śabara is aware of the fact that sentences

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566 TatKaum on Śāṅkhyaśikā 5, p. 86: śrutir vākyajanitam vākyārthajñānam/ tac ca svataḥ pramāṇam apaaurusēyavedājanitatvena sakaladōsāśāṁkāvinirmuktam yuktam bhavati/ evam vedamūlasmṛttīhāsāparāṇaḥjñānītām api jñānam yuktam/.
568 MiBh on sūtra 1.1.2 (Frauwallner 1968: p. 16 l. 18-19), quoted below.
can be ambiguous in that they often allow of multiple interpretations. The interpreter of Vedic sentences must therefore not merely find a possible meaning of the sentence concerned, but the meaning that is nearest to the text. (Recall that the intention of the author plays no role, since the Veda has no author.) The search for the ‘nearest meaning’, and the rejection of ‘more remote’ meanings, characterizes Śabara’s Bhāṣya throughout, and is fundamental to his procedure.

Śabara’s exegetical efforts frequently concentrate on comparing two different interpretations of a Vedic statement. One of the two is in the end discarded, the other one retained. The Mīmāṃsā has formulated a number of criteria meant to be of help in making a correct decision. These criteria do not interest us in themselves at present. We are more interested in the type of reasoning used to establish those criteria, and to choose between different interpretations in general. Here we find that Śabara sometimes uses the expressions ‘nearest meaning’ (saṁnikṛṣṭa artha) and ‘more remote meaning’ (viprakṛṣṭa artha). Of these two, Śabara always gives preference to the ‘nearest meaning’. He follows in this respect the Mīmāṃsāsaṅkhyā on which he comments. Sūtra 3.3.14 enumerates a number of factors that can play a role in the interpretation of a Vedic statement and adds that, in cases where several of these factors apply simultaneously, the ones figuring later in the enumeration are weaker than the earlier ones, because the meaning obtained with their help is more remote (arthaviprakarsāt).

Consider, as a concrete example, the injunction “One [must] worship the gārhapatiya [fire] with the Aindrī”. The Aindrī is a sacred formula which begins with the words: kadā ca na starīr asī nendra saścasi dāśūse. This formula contains the name Indra, which might be taken to indicate that it is to be used in order to worship the god Indra. The injunction, on the other hand, states clearly that the Aindrī must be used to worship the gārhapatiya, which is a sacrificial fire. In other words, two conflicting interpretations present themselves.

Śabara’s Bhāṣya discusses this question at length under sūtra 3.3.14. The position finally accepted is as follows. The injunction to worship the gārhapatiya fire is explicit (pratyaksakā) and constitutes for this reason the nearest interpretation. The formula kadā ca na etc. does not state explicitly that Indra is to be worshipped with it; this latter interpretation is therefore more remote and must be discarded.

Consider next the sacred formula: syonaṁ te sadanaṁ kṛnomi ghṛtasya dhārayā suśevam kalpayāmi; tasmin sidāmre pratitiṣṭha vṛiṇāṁ medha sumanasyamāṇah “I make your seat agreeable, with a stream of clarified butter I make it very dear. Sit on it, establish yourself in the nectar of immortality, oh oblation of rice, being favorably disposed.” Unlike the formula studied above, there is in this case no injunction that specifies the context in which this formula is to be used. One must therefore be guided by its contents. But here there is a difficulty. The formula has two parts: the first part concerns the preparation of the seat, the second the placing of the sacrificial cake. Should the whole formula be used at both occasions? Or should one use the first half during the

\[569\] MīmSū 3.3.14: śruti-liṅga-vāyka-prakaraṇa-sthāna-samākhyānāṁ samavāye pāradaurbalyam arthaviprakarsāt.
\[570\] MaitS 3.2.4 (ed. v. Schroeder p. 201. 13): ainḍryā gārhapatyay upatiṣṭhate.
\[571\] MaitS 1.3.26; RV 8.51.7; etc. Jamison & Breerton (2014: 1135) translate: “Never are you a barren cow, nor, Indra, do you go dry for the pious man.”
\[572\] A similar reasoning is presented under sūtra 5.4.1.
\[573\] TaitBr 3.7.5.2-3, which has karomι instead of kṛnomι. With kṛnomι this formula is found MSS 1.2.6.19.
preparation of the seat, and the second half while the sacrificial cake is placed on it? Here, too, the answer depends on the relative ‘proximity’ of the different interpretations. The ‘nearest’ interpretation will eliminate the others. Which is the nearest interpretation in this case? For Śābara there is no doubt.\(^{574}\) The connection between the second half of the formula and the placing of the sacrificial cake is direct, more direct at any rate than the link between the first half of the formula and this activity. The second half refers to the placing of the cake, whereas the first half is syntactically connected with the second half, which in its turn refers to that activity. A similar reasoning applies to the relationship of the two halves to the preparation of the seat.\(^{575}\)

The *Mīmāṃsābhāṣya* under sūtra 3.3.14 contains a number of further discussions relating to the relative priority of one out of two possible interpretations of a Vedic statement. This sūtra establishes, as a matter of fact, a number of principles of priority that are used throughout the *Bhāṣya*. All these discussions have in common that one of two interpretations is discarded because it is less ‘near’ than its competitor. We shall not study all these cases here. The two examples which we have considered suffice to reveal a general exegetical principle of the Mīmāṃsā: the correct interpretation of a Vedic statement is its most direct interpretation. The direct interpretation, we further learn, follows as far as possible what the text states explicitly, and avoids inferential and multi-layered arguments.

There is an obvious ‘psychological’ or ‘epistemological’ dimension to these discussions, which however rarely becomes explicit. But sometimes Śābara gives a hint that he is aware of it. So at the end of his discussion of sūtra 3.3.14. Here we learn that in the case of competing interpretations, different notions (*pratyaya*) are in competition. The difference between a correct and an incorrect notion is that the latter is followed by another notion to the extent that it is incorrect, whereas the former is not.\(^{576}\)

The principle that the most direct interpretation is the correct one pervades many other discussions in Śābara’s *Bhāṣya*. For one thing, if we are to find the most direct interpretation of a Vedic statement, it must exist and be unambiguous. This is not evident in all cases. Take the meanings of individual Sanskrit words. Almost any Sanskrit word, as is testified by the dictionaries, has various meanings.\(^{577}\) Which is the ‘direct’ interpretation that we must choose? The Mīmāṃsā takes a categorical position in this matter: each word has but one primary sense; the other meanings are derived from this primary sense. The primary sense is known from the word alone; secondary meanings are understood because of some connection with the primary sense that is understood first.\(^{578}\)

In concrete cases it is not always easy to decide which of two known senses is primary, which one secondary. Where there are Vedic passages that clearly use the term concerned in one of the two meanings, there is no difficulty. The word *yava*, for example, can refer to barley and to long pepper. The Vedic sentence “Where other plants wither,

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574 On MīmŚū 3.3.14 (p. 255 f.).
575 Under MīmŚū 2.1.46 Šābara shows that this one sacred formula (*mantra*) consists of two sentences.
576 On MīmŚū 3.3.14 (p. 267 f.).
577 One is reminded of an observation by Doniger & Smith 1991: xxiii: “it has been said that every word in Sanskrit designates its basic meaning, the opposite of that, a word for an elephant, a name of God, and a position in sexual intercourse.”
578 Cf. Šābara on MīmŚū 3.2.1: *yah śabdād evāvaṅgamyate, sa prathamo ’rhoh mukhyah/ mukham iva bhavatīti mukhya ity ucyate/ Yas tu khalu pratītād ārthāt kenacit sāmbandhena ganyate, sa paścādbhāvāj jaghanam iva bhavatīti jaghanyah/ gunasāmbandhāc ca gauṇa itī*. 
these [yava plants] stand up happily, as it were” shows that the meaning ‘barley’ is primary in the Veda. Sometimes the Veda does not help to make the choice. Take the example of the word paravan. It is known right from the Himālaya down to Cape Comorin. Śābara reminds us, that this word is used in the sense ‘time’ and ‘combination’. Which of these is the primary sense? Etymological reflections point to ‘combination’ as the primary sense. The meaning ‘time’ can be obtained from this primary sense. Different reasons are adduced to choose between the two meanings of caru, ‘vessel’ and ‘oblation of rice’, both of them ‘known from the Himālaya down to Cape Comorin’. The details, and the outcome, of this discussion do not interest us at present. What interests us is the presupposition that expresses itself in them, namely the principle that Vedic statements allow of an unambiguous and direct interpretation.

Śābara’s Bhāṣya on Mīmāṃsāsūtra 1.3.30-35 contains an interesting discussion on what exactly is denoted by words. Is it the shape (ākṛti) shared in common by all individuals designated by that word? Or is it an individual (vyakti) thus designated? Both are understood when a word (and Śābara obviously thinks here in the first place of generic terms, such as “cow”) is pronounced, but both cannot be designated (no doubt for the same reason as above, viz., that a word cannot have two “meanings”). Only the shape is directly expressed. Śābara explains why in the following passage: “It is self-evident that an individual is understood when a word is pronounced. The distinction whether [the individual is understood directly] from the word or from the shape is not evident [to everyone].” Śābara subsequently establishes that the individual is understood from the shape rather than from the word, by showing that an individual is known from the shape even when no word is uttered; and where a word is uttered but the relevant shape is not understood, there no individual is understood either. In other words, what we understand directly from the word is the shape. This shape, in its turn, can bring to our mind an individual characterized by it. This means that the shape, rather than any individual, comes most immediately to our mind when hearing a word. And this means, in view of the principle under discussion, that words denote shapes rather than individuals.

Elsewhere in Śābara’s Bhāṣya a different answer is considered to the question as to which is the notion most directly communicated by words. According to an opponent, it is the notion of mere sound devoid of meaning. This position is clearly inspired by the principle we are studying. Words first communicate the notion of sound; the meaning that we understand from a word arises as a result of recognizing the sound first. Ergo, words primarily communicate the notion of sound. It is obvious that this conclusion, though close to the general principle of exegesis of the Mīmāṃsā, cannot be acceptable. Both the Mīmāṃsāsūtra (7.2.5) and Śābara’s Bhāṣya reject it by stating that the connection between words and meanings is natural (autpatiṇa). In other words, no extra step is required to get from hearing the sound to understanding its meaning. This way the exegetical principle of the Mīmāṃsā is saved. One could also say that the belief that the words and meanings of the Sanskrit language have an inherent connection is closely

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579 Śābara on MīmŚū 1.3.9.
580 Or ‘up to the Himālaya and up to Cape Comorin’, as Wezler (1992: 472) prefers to translate this expression.
581 Śābara on MīmŚū 9.2.51-53.
582 See Śābara on MīmŚū 10.1.34-44.
583 Śābara on MīmŚū 1.3.33: tāt etad āmapratyakṣaṁ yac chabda uccarite vyaktiṁ pratiyāta iti/ kim śabdād utākṛter iti vibhāgo na pratyakṣaḥ/.
584 For an assessment of Śābara’s argument, see Scharf 1993.
linked to the dogma that Vedic statements can be correctly and unambiguously interpreted by choosing the ‘most direct’ interpretation, that is, the interpretation that involves the minimum of mental or epistemological stages.

This same principle allows us to understand other discussions in Śabara’s Bhāṣya. Some words express a meaning different from the one suggested by their parts. The word *kusāla* is an example. The parts *ku* + *ṣa* explain the word as “he who cuts (lāti) *kuṣa* grass.” Yet *kusāla* expresses the meaning ‘skilful’. Śabara admits that the meaning ‘skilful’ can be explained as a derivative of the meaning ‘who cuts grass’. Yet the meaning ‘skilful’ must be preferred, precisely because we understand the word in that sense. In other words, we arrive more directly at the meaning ‘skilful’. This same type of reasoning applies even to words that are only used by barbarians.

Direct interpretation determines what analysis to apply to the compound *niṣādasthapati*. At first sight two interpretations seem possible: ‘leader (sthapati) of the Niṣādas’, or ‘leader who is a Niṣāda’. The Niṣādas constitute a tribe outside the regular Brahmanical order of society, who are not, therefore, allowed to participate in Vedic rites. Yet the *niṣādasthapati* is mentioned in the context of a Vedic sacrifice. The question is unavoidable whether this leader is himself a Niṣāda. The second analysis designates him as one, whereas the first analysis leaves the possibility open that he is not. Śabara prefers none-the-less the second analysis. His reasoning is as follows: The part *niṣāda*- in *niṣādasthapati* means primarily, and therefore most directly, ‘Niṣāda’. The meaning ‘of the Niṣādas’, which appears in the first interpretation, can only be arrived at secondarily. The exegetical principle that the most direct interpretation is to be accepted decides therefore in favor of the meaning ‘leader who is a Niṣāda’, and this in spite of the ritual problems this interpretation entails.

It is easy to see that this same principle can be used to justify the belief that words in the Veda have the same meaning as in ordinary life. The very first sentences of Śabara’s Bhāṣya present this line of reasoning in connection with the interpretation of sūtras, but it is clear that the same applies to the interpretation of Vedic statements. The main weakness of any other position is that it entails superfluous effort (yatnagaurava). This argument derives its strength from the principle that we now know, and according to which the best and only acceptable interpretation is the most direct one, i.e., the one that implies minimal mental effort. Śabara on *Mimāṃsāsūtra* 1.3.30 states simply that there is no difference between words in the Veda and in ordinary life, because we do not notice a difference between them.

Attention has already been drawn to the psychological/epistemological dimension of many of the exegetical arguments. This dimension is rarely made explicit. An exception is the discussion of the injunction “one should perform the Darśa and the Pūrṇāmāsa sacrifices” (darśapūrṇamāsābhīyāṃ yajeta). This injunction is incomplete: it does not specify how these sacrifices are to be performed. Indeed, Śabara calls this injunction “the beginning of an injunction” (vidhyādi), which needs an end. The required supplementary information is found in the section that prescribes adding fuel to the fire, etc. (agnyanvādhānādividhānakāṇḍa). The injunction forms one single statement with

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585 See Śabara on *MimŚū* 6.7.22.
586 Śabara on *MimŚū* 1.3.10.
587 Śabara on *MimŚū* 6.1.51.
588 Śabara on *MimŚū* 1.3.30: na teṣām esām ca vibhāgam upalabhāmahe.
589 The origin of this quotation is obscure. See Garge 1952: 125, 128, 136.
this section, which has been put next to it in the mind; the resulting single statement is of the form “One should in this manner perform the Darśa and the Pūrṇamāsā sacrifices”. 590

This proximity in the mind has to be treated with caution, as we can learn from Śabara’s discussion under śūtra 3.1.21. This discussion concerns the sections (anuvāka) 7 to 11 of Taíttrīyā Saṁhitā 2.5. Sections 7 and 8 deal with the mantras called Śāmidhenī; section 9 deals with the Nvīds; section 10 continues the discussion of certain Śāmidhenīs. The question presents itself whether the sections that deal with the Śāmidhenīs can be understood together, thus constituting the context (prakaraṇa) for section 11. The idea is launched that sections 7, 8 and 10 can be understood “as a single statement” (ekavākyatā) because the sections 7 and 8 come together with section 10 in the mind. This idea is rejected with the argument that these sections are separated from each other by another section that deals with a different subject. Where another subject is introduced, the earlier subject is no longer present in the mind. Here the opponent persists, and observes that one can recall the earlier subject through mental effort (dhyāna), etc. Śabara’s reply is important: In that case the result is due to human understanding, and is no longer Vedic. 591

This last remark is significant. It identifies the mind as a potential source of error in the interpretation of a Vedic statement. The correct interpretation must therefore involve an absolute minimum of participation of the mind. In fact, the most direct interpretation is precisely the one that involves the least participation of the mind. It is of course axiomatic for the Mīmāṁsā that the perfect interpretation of a Vedic statement exists, and can be found. In other words, it is possible to reduce the participation of the mind to an absolute minimum.

It is easy to see how this position can be extended so as to cover all forms of valid cognition. It then states that all forms of cognition are right, unless they have been interfered with. This, of course, is what came to be known under the name svatāḥprāmāṇya. Schmithausen (1965: 158-159), while presenting the position of the Vṛttikāra (whose comments on Mīmāṁsāsūtra 1.1.4-5 are included in Śabara’s Bhāṣya; see above), observes correctly:

Die wahre Erkenntnis ist also der Normalfall, der Irrtum aber das Abnorme, da er durch ein zusätzliches Moment, die Störung, bewirkt ist. D.h. alle Erkenntnis ist grundsätzlich wahr, kann jedoch ausnahmsweise durch Störungen verdorben werden.

These disturbances (Störungen; doṣa) can very well come from the mind. Correct perception, the Vṛttikāra observes, can fail to come about because the mind is disturbed by hunger etc., or the sense-organ by the eye disease called timira etc., or the outer object

590 Śabara on MīmSū 8.1.2: ... vidhyādiḥ ... agnyanvādhānādīvidhānāndena ... buddhau samnāhinaikavākyatām yāti darśapūrṇamāsābhāyām yajetettham iti.
591 Śabara on MīmSū 3.1.21: avaidikah sa puruṣabuddhipūrvako vāyārtho bhavet. A parallel situation is discussed under MīmSū 2.1.49. Of a sequence of three mantras only the first one has a verbal form; number two requires (but does not have) another verbal form; and number three requires the same verbal form as number one. According to Śabara, this verbal form can be supplied to the third mantra, but it is not the Vedic word that is supplied, but the identical secular word.
by minuteness and the like.  

It will be clear that the notion of self-sufficient validity of valid cognition (svatahprāmāṇya) and the exegetical principle identified in the preceding pages are closely related. Both try to identify, then to exclude, disturbing influences from the process leading to valid cognition, and both start from the assumption that such identification and exclusion are indeed possible. Perception that arises from a causal complex that is free from disturbing factors is necessarily correct. In the same way, Vedic statements naturally (svatah) (i.e., when there are no disturbances by more than basic human mental activity) give rise to an interpretation (i.e., understanding, cognition) that is as a result necessarily correct. The belief that an interpretation can — and should — be found that has arisen without disturbances is a programmatic principle that determines how to interpret Vedic statements. Interpreting the Veda means identifying disturbing factors — such as the more than basic activity of the human mind — and eliminating them. Any interpretation that requires more participation of the mind than is strictly necessary is no longer Vedic, it is due to human understanding.

The purity of the Veda, then, is endangered by the activity of the human mind, or any other mind for that matter. This conviction expresses itself in another fundamental dogma of the Mīmāṃsā, too. For mental activity does not only threaten to play a role in the interpretation of a text; mental activity normally plays a role in its composition, too. The Mīmāṃsā avoids this danger by denying that the Veda has been composed at all. The Veda has no author, and this is possible because it has no beginning in time. Eternality and authorlessness are therefore two sides of the same position. And this position is ultimately based on the belief that the purity of the Veda is endangered by contact with any mind, be it human or divine.

In order to justify this position, the Mīmāṃsā presents a theory of the inherent correctness of the word by itself, which can however be lost on account of the use made of it by human beings. The following passage, with the beginning of which we are already familiar, explains this:

It is a contradiction to say ‘[the Vedic word] states’ and ‘incorrectly’. When one says ‘it states’, this means ‘it makes known’, that it is the cause that the thing is known. … If, then, it is understood on the basis of an injunction that the Agnihotra results in heaven, how can one say that it is not like that? And if it is not like that, how can it be known? It is contradictory to know a thing that does not exist. … With regard to a statement made by a human being, on the other hand, if it comes from a person who is trustworthy, or if it refers to the realm of the senses, it is not incorrect. But if it comes from an untrustworthy person, or if it does not refer to the realm of the senses, then it is produced by the human understanding [only] and is not a means of valid knowledge.  

592 Frauwallner 1968: 261. 12-14; yadā kṣudādibhir upahatam mano bhavati, indriyam vā timirādibhir, sauksmyādibhir vā bāhyo visayas, tato mithyājñānam, anupahatesu samyagjñānam.
593 Śābara Bhāṣya 1.1.2 (Frauwallner 1968: p. 161. 15 – p. 181. 5): vibhratisiddham idam abhidhiyate “bravīti ca vitathām ca” iti/ bravīti ity ucyate ‘vabodhayati, budhyamānasya nimittaṃ bhavati iti/ …/ yadi ca codanāyāṃ satyām “agnihotrāt svargo bhavati” ity avagamyate, katham ucyate “na tathā bhavati” iti/ atha laukikam vacanam, tac cet pratyayitāt puruṣād indriyaviṣayāṃ vā, avitatham eva tat/ athāpratayitāt puruṣād anindriyaviṣayāṃ vā, tat puruṣabuddhispabhavam apramāṇam/. 
It goes without saying that the dogma of the authorlessness of the Veda, too, like the principle of interpretation discussed earlier, influences the way Vedic statements are interpreted. A text without beginning cannot refer to events that happened at any particular time.\(^{594}\) Šabarā is aware of this, and explicitly refers to it at some places. There is, for example, a Vedic statement that says that the god Prajāpati extracted his omentum.\(^{595}\) Šabarā discusses it and observes: “If a historical event were to be referred to, the Veda would be open to the charge of having a beginning.”\(^{596}\) Similarly, the Vedic statement “We grasped your right hand, o Indra”\(^{597}\), if taken literally, would be open to the same charge.\(^{598}\) Elsewhere (1.1.31), his belief in the beginninglessness of the Veda obliges Šabarā to give different interpretations to expressions such as prāvāhani and audḍālaki, which normally signify ‘son of Pravāhaṇa’ and ‘son of Uddālaka’ .\(^{599}\) In cases like these the principle of the most direct interpretation and the dogma of the beginninglessness of the Veda are in conflict. For clearly, the most direct interpretation of the statement “Prajāpati extracted his omentum” is that Prajāpati, at some point of time, extracted his omentum. The principle of the most direct interpretation meets with difficulties in other situations, too. Some Vedic statements do not agree with our experience. Šabarā gives the following examples: “The trees sat down for a sacrificial session”; “The snakes sat down for a sacrificial session”; “The old bull sings mad [songs]”.\(^{600}\) Cases like these serve as justification to deviate in numerous instances from the most direct interpretation, and resort to a secondary interpretation instead. Secondary interpretations play a major role in Mimāṃsā .\(^{601}\) In the end most of the Veda is interpreted in this way by this school. This does not, however, change the fact that a secondary interpretation is only allowed in cases where the primary interpretation is not possible for one reason or other. The statements that remain for direct interpretation are few indeed. Only Vedic statements that are not, and cannot be, in conflict with other sources of knowledge are in the end retained. Such statements are the injunctions. The injunction, Šabarā explains, is a part of the Veda that communicates something unknown by other means.\(^{602}\)

But even if, for practical reasons, only a minority of Vedic statements can be strictly interpreted according to the rule of interpretation expounded above, the general

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594 Strangely enough, the rabbinical interpretation of the Hebrew canon does not seem to accept this inference: even though the scriptures are timeless, they do refer to historical events. See Böhl 1991: 162.

595 TaitŚ 2.1.1.4: sa ātmamo vāpām udakkhidat.

596 Šabarā on MimŚū 1.2.10: vṛttāntānvākhyāne ‘pi vidhīyamāne ādīmattādoṣo vedasya prasajyeta.

597 RV 10.47.1 etc.: jagṛbhma te daksīṇam indra hastam.

598 Šabarā on MimŚū 9.1.9: athaivaṃ ucaya, tasyaitad vacanaṃ yo gṛhitavāmāṃ tasya hastam iti/ucAYate/ naitad adhgyavaseyam/ ādīmattādoṣo vedasya prasajyate.

599 Pollock (1989: 608; 1990: 330) refers to this passage in an article that draws attention to the non-historical nature of much of Sanskrit literature, possibly in imitation of the Veda.

600 Šabarā on MimŚū 1.1.32: vanaspatayaḥ sattram āsata; sarpāḥ sattram āsata; jaradgavā gāyati māttakāṇī. None of these three citations seems traceable as we know it.

601 Not only in the Mimāṃsā. Fox (1991: 41) observes with regard to Biblical interpretation: “Unerring scripture requires the acceptance of allegory, the belief that a text may appear to say one thing while meaning another.”

602 Šabarā on MimŚū 1.4.1: kaścid asya (= samāmānvasya) bhūgo vidhir yo ’viditam arthāṃ vedavati yathā somena yajeta iti. We will see below that certain Vedāntic thinkers maintained that the Veda communicates also certain other things, different from injunctions, that cannot be known by other means.
principle remains unaffected. It states that each Vedic statement allows of a most direct interpretation that is independent of the mental activity of the person who “receives” this interpretation.

The Veda, then, is not produced by a human mind (nor by any other mind for that matter), and nor should it be interpreted by a mind. Or rather, only those interpretations that reduce the interference of the mind to a minimum can be accepted as correct. In this way the Veda remains pure, not touched by any mind, both in its composition and in its interpretation. This purity of the Veda, however, is only possible if it is accepted that the Veda is eternal, i.e., without beginning, and secondly, that this corpus allows of a ‘direct’ interpretation. The first consequence was a central tenet in the world view of classical Mimāṃsā. The second consequence constituted a point of departure for philosophical developments and elaborations within the school.

*Other sentences*

Brahmins were primarily interested in Vedic words and sentences. Non-Vedic words were incorrect, and could therefore be discarded. Non-Vedic sentences, on the other hand, could use correct Sanskrit, and if they were truthful, they could not be discarded as incorrect. And yet, even true and correct Sanskrit sentences presented difficulties that could not be ignored. These difficulties, it appears, were first pointed out by Buddhists, but once brought to light, they obliged Brahmanical thinkers to deal with them in detail. These reflections gave rise to the most interesting philosophical developments within Brahmanism. Since they received their initial impetus from Buddhism and can also otherwise not be separated from developments inside Buddhism, they will be discussed in Part III (§ III.4.2).
IIB. BRAHMINS AND SOCIETY

Brahmins, as we have seen, did not need other members of society — or at least they claimed that they did not need them. But the other members of society did need Brahmins. For many centuries, Brahmins presented themselves — and were accepted by a growing proportion of the population — as the masters of all knowledge worth knowing. This included forms of knowledge that provide power, among these rites and spells. Clearly this aspect of Brahmanical knowledge added immensely to their attraction, not least among those with access or aspirations to worldly power. Generally speaking, Brahmins were thought of — and thought of themselves — as being closest to what we may call the sacred.

The present Part IIB will discuss two aspects of this belief. It will first show Brahmanical behavior was looked upon as exemplary and worthy of imitation. Subsequently it will point out how Brahmanical literature of the period emphasizes, explicitly or implicitly, that Brahmanical power is virtually limitless and exceeds even the power of kings.

IIB.1. Imitatio Brahmanae

Implicit in the Brahmins' vision of themselves was a vision of the society in which they lived. This vision of society is most easily understood as an extension of the Brahmins' vision of themselves. Some parts of the Māṇava Dharmaśāstra illustrate this most aptly. As pointed out by Rocher (1975), this text prescribes six activities for the Brahmin. These six activities form three binaries:

- adhyayana : adhyāpana
- yajana : yājana
- dāna : pratigraha

These terms can respectively be translated as follows:
- "studying the Vedas" / "making others study the Vedas"
- "performing sacrifices for one’s own benefit" / "making others perform sacrifices for their own benefit"
- "giving gifts" / "receiving gifts"

The first items in these three binaries — "studying the Vedas", "performing sacrifices for one's own benefit" and "giving gifts" — are the activities Brahmins will supposedly engage in when left to themselves. The corresponding second items do no more than induce others to do the same. These others, to be sure, are the members of the three highest caste-classes (Brahmins, Kṣatriyas and Vaiśyas) and exclude the Śūdras. The members of those caste-classes are told to imitate the Brahmins, at least in these three respects.603 It will become clear that the imitation of Brahmins extends further.

603 The question whether and to what extent all this is no more than fictional schematization with little or no link to reality must always be kept in mind. See, e.g., Scharfe 2002: 88-89: "It is doubtful ... that kṣatriyas and vaiśyas ever devoted as much time to Vedic study as did the
Let us reconsider the points discussed in connection with the core vision in Part IIA.

Purity of descent is a sine qua non for being a Brahmin. From a Brahmanical point of view, the same restraint applies to all other groups in society. Intermarriage between different groups results in a lower status for the descendents. Starting from a fundamental fourfold division of society (see below), Brahmanical theoreticians added numerous lower groups that were supposedly the outcome of intermarriages between members of those original divisions. The general idea is that intermarriage between groups is to be avoided, and leads to loss of status.

Ritual purity, too, is an essential feature of a Brahmin's life. And once again, many of the rituals that accompany the life of a Brahmin are accessible to others. That is to say, members of a society that is organized according to Brahmanical principles follow the Brahmanical example to the extent they are permitted to do so.

Vedic knowledge is another feature that was extended to society at large. Briefly put, non-Brahmins were divided into those entitled to Vedic knowledge, and those who were not. The former included political rulers and their kin (called ksatriya) and certain others (vaśya); those without access to Vedic knowledge fell under the general category of śūdra. The resulting four caste-classes — brāhmaṇa, ksatriya, vaśya and śūdra — constitute the four varnas, which came to be thought of as an essential aspect of Hinduism (varnāśrama-dharma). The question whether many members of the caste-classes different from Brahmans who had access to Vedic learning, i.e. who came to be included in the category of twice-born (dvija), actually took advantage of this privilege must remain open, but it seems justified to remain skeptical in this respect.

The use of Sanskrit is a different matter. Knowledge of this language (unlike knowledge of the Veda) was accessible to all, it being the only ‘real’ language. During the first centuries of the Common Era we see indeed that Sanskrit is increasingly used by non-Brahmins. North-Indian Buddhism, after using other languages for half a millennium and developing a highly sophisticated philosophy in those other languages, shifted wholesale to Sanskrit. Jainism followed a few centuries later. Inscriptions from roughly that period found on the island of Socotra, far away from continental India, show that sailors, most or all of whom were certainly not Brahmans, used Sanskrit. Sanskrit also...
makes its appearance in political inscriptions during this period. In all these cases (including the case of Buddhism) the increasing use of Sanskrit testifies to an increasing degree of brahmanization.

The above observations show that brahmanization often finds expression in the tendency to imitate the Brahmanical life-style and customs. Imitating gods or their representatives is a feature observed in other religions.⁶⁰⁷ Imitating Brahmns makes sense if Brahmns were looked upon as gods or their representatives. Brahmanical literature tells us, as a matter of fact, that Brahmns are gods. We find this claim already in Vedic literature,⁶⁰⁸ and texts from the period we are studying say much the same.⁶⁰⁹ Consider further the following lines from the Mahābhārata (13.35.19-21).⁶¹⁰

As a result of contempt for Brahmns, the demons live in water. Through the grace of Brahmns, the gods reside in heaven. [Just as] it is impossible to touch ether, or move the Himalaya, or restrain the Ganges by means of a dam, [so] the Brahmns are invincible in the world. The earth cannot be ruled in opposition to the Brahmns. The noble Brahmns are gods even to the gods themselves.

The observation that Brahmns were looked upon, or wanted to be looked upon, as gods helps to explain that the features of a brahmanized society can to a fair extent be described in terms of imitation, the imitation of Brahmns by those who are not Brahmns themselves. However, it does not answer the question why others would be willing to accept the divine status of Brahmns. Did they not have eyes to see that Brahmns were human beings like themselves?

We must not forget that Brahmns originally owed their special position to their role as sacrificial priests. They never renounced this privilege, even during the difficult period when there were few sponsors left who were interested in Vedic sacrifices. When times turned once more to their advantage, Vedic sacrifices were again on the list of services Brahmns offered to interested rulers. Puṣyamitra, the general who was instrumental in bringing down the Maurya Empire, is believed to have performed a Horse Sacrifice (aśvamedha),⁶¹¹ and various more recent rulers followed his example. But this

⁶⁰⁷ See, e.g., Petersen 2013 and Stuckrad & Petersen 2013.
⁶⁰⁸ E.g. AVŚ 6.114.1(?); 11.1.23; 12.3.38; 12.4.23; TaitS 1.7.3.1; 2.5.9.6; KāthS 8.13; MaitS 1.4.6; ŚPaBr 2.2.2.6; 2.4.3.14; 3.1.1.11; 4.3.4.4. Cf. Macdonell & Keith 1912: II: 82, with references to Weber 1868: 35-36; Schroeder 1887: 146-147.
⁶¹⁰ Mḥbh 13.35.19-21: brahmānānām paribhavād asurāḥ salīleṣāyāḥ/ brahmānānām prasādāc ca devāḥ svarganīṣānāḥ// aṣṭakṣaṃ srapṣaṃ ākāśaṃ acālaṃ himavān gīrh/ avāyā setunā gangā durjayā brahmānām bhūvī/ na brāhmaṇavirodhena śākyā śāṣṭram vasumṛdhara/ brāhmaṇaḥ hi mahātmāno devānām api devaṭāḥ//
⁶¹¹ "Echos of this apparently most impressive event are found in the famous line in Patañjali’s Vyākaraṇa-Mahābhāṣya (Mahā-bh 2:123.3-4): iha puṣyamitrām yājyāṃḥ ‘Here we are conducting a sacrifice for Puṣyamitra’; in Kālidāsa’s drama Mālavikāgnimitra (where Puṣyamitra’s son Agnimitra is a major character); and, finally, in Buddhist sources such as the Aṣokāvadāhāna.” (Houben 2011: 174). Thite (2015) points out that the aśvamedha “was never actually performed in strict accordance with its description in the Vedic literature”; even the authors of the Sanskrit epics did not know the details of its Vedic description. Somethings similar
time Brahmins had more on offer. Their ritual and otherworldly competence remained a crucial asset, used to provide services to other members of society. These services pertained to the rites of passage that, following Brahmanical example, marked important events in people's lives. They also concerned interpreting signs, predicting the future and other such activities that only Brahmins could perform in virtue of their other-worldly competence. This same otherworldly competence enabled Brahmins in more recent centuries to take on the role of temple priests (see § IIA.1.3, above). All of these activities emphasized the Brahmins' role as intermediaries between this world and a higher reality. Their constant private preoccupation with ritual confirmed it further. However, here as elsewhere, the proof of the pudding is in the eating. The proof of successful ritual activity is the ritual power that results from it.\textsuperscript{612} And possession of ritual power is a theme that the Brahmanical texts of the period, especially those that aim directly or indirectly at a non-Brahmanical audience, regularly emphasize.

IIB.2. Brahmanical power

IIB.2.1. The Atharva-Veda

Brahmins had supernatural powers. In the good old days these flowed through the performance of the solemn ritual. Without clients for these expensive rites, the supernatural powers of the Brahmins were in danger of being underused and overlooked. Fortunately there was a solution to this problem: the magical formulas that came to be collected in the \textit{Atharva-Veda}. “According to the \textit{Āngirasakalpa} of the Atharvaveda there are in the atharvanic tradition ten classes of rites, viz. those that, like the German \textit{Sege}, are to appease or avert evil (\textit{sāntika}), that are to promote welfare (\textit{pausūṭika}), to bring others into subjection by means of charms (\textit{vaśā}), to hinder or paralyse (\textit{stambhana}), to bewilder (\textit{mohana}), to bring about hatred (\textit{dvesāna}), to eradicate (\textit{uccātana}), to kill (\textit{mārana}), to seduce (\textit{ākārsana}), and to scare away (\textit{vidrāvāna}).”\textsuperscript{613} Whether or not we accept this enumeration as exhaustive or even fully appropriate (activities like prognostication and medical cures were also associated with the \textit{Atharva-Veda}), it will be clear that the formulas collected in the \textit{Atharva-Veda} provide opportunities to Brahmins to use their supernatural powers also outside the realm of extensive and expensive solemn rites. These kinds of formulas and the associated rites made it possible for Brahmins to exert their powers even in hostile situations, in circumstances where the support of the ruling classes was not guaranteed or worse.

It goes almost without saying that these alternative ways of using their supernatural powers came in handy during the time when Brahmanism had to reinvent itself and had to establish its worth in the eyes of ruling classes for whom the solemn Vedic ritual was not part of inherited custom. The formulas of the \textit{Atharva-Veda} were of

\textsuperscript{612} As late as the Mutiny/Uprising of 1857, the last Mughal emperor, Zafar, in spite of being a Muslim, did not hesitate to pay Brahmins “to make daily prayers for victory ‘before the [sacred] flame, and there is even one reference to a Brahm who told Zafar that ‘if he were placed in a well-protected house for three days and allowed whatever materials he required for creating odorous fumes he would contrive that the king would be victorious’. Zafar appears to have been appropriately impressed and duly gave him what he needed.” (Dalrymple 2006: 267)

\textsuperscript{613} Gonda 1975: 277.
the greatest importance to Brahmans during this period. Indeed, it is possible, even likely, that these formulas were collected into what we now call the Atharva-Veda precisely during this period. A consideration of references to the Atharva-Veda and its formulas in Vedic and early post-Vedic literature supports this.

The Atharva-Veda in tradition

The Atharva-Veda has come to be looked upon as number four of a set of four Vedas: Rg-Veda, Yajur-Veda, Sāma-Veda and Atharva-Veda. This was not always the case. In fact, our early sources rarely speak of four Vedas: they prefer the numbers three and five. The Atharva-Veda does not figure in the list of three, nor is it usually included in the list of five. Let us consider the evidence.

The tradition of five (rather than three or four) Vedas is attested both in Vedic and non-Vedic texts. The Buddhist canon preserves it in a form which does not mention the Atharva-Veda. The following phrase recurs often in Pali:

... tīnāṃ vedānaṃ pāragū sanīghanḍuketiubhānāṃ sākkharappabhedānaṃ itihāsapañcamānaṃ padako veyyākarāṇo ...

The same phrase occurs in Sanskrit with minor variations:

... trayāṇāṃ vedānaṃ pāragah sanīghanṭakaitabhabhānāṃ sākṣaraprabhedānāṃ itihāsapañcamānaṃ padaco veyyākarāṇaḥ ...

... trayāṇāṃ vedānaṃ pārago sākṣaraprabhedānāṃ itihāsapañcamānaṃ sanīghanṭakaiṭabhānāṃ ...

... trayāṇāṃ vedānaṃ pārago sanīrghaṇṭhakaiṭabhānāṃ itihāsapañcamānaṃ ...

... trayāṇāṃ vedānaṃ pārago aksaraprabhedānāṃ itihāsapañcamānaṃ sanīghanṭukaiṭabhānāṃ anupadakavyākarānakauśalo ...

An echo of this phrase is found in Avadāna 33 of the Divyāvadāna:

... vedān samanumaratī sma sāṅgopāṅgān sarahasyān sanīghanṭukaiṭabhān sākṣaraprabhedān itihāsapañcamān ...

All these phrases appear to enumerate five Vedas. The reason to think so is that itihāsapañcamānaṃ (or its equivalent in Pali) is a Bahuvrīhi compound qualifying vedānaṃ, and should therefore be translated: "with itihāsa as fifth [Veda]". We shall see that this interpretation fits other evidence that will be discussed presently.

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614 DN I.88, 114, 138; MN II.133, 141, [146.] 147, 165, 168, 210; AN I.163, 166; III.223; Sn p. 105.
615 Avś II.19.
616 Mvu I.231.17-18.
617 Mvu II.77.9-10; Mvu II.89.16-17 has kuśalo for analpako.
618 Mvu III.450.6-7.
619 Divy 619.21-23.
The different phrases show some variation regarding the precise contents of Vedas number four and five. They all consider itihāsa ‘legend’ part (sometimes the whole) of the fifth Veda. Most of them agree that the fourth Veda encompasses aksara / akkharā ‘phonology (PTSD)’ and pra-/pabheda ‘etymology (PTSD), exegesis (Rhys Davids 1899: 109)’, or perhaps rather aksaraprabheda / akkharappabheda ‘philologische Technik (Franke 1913: 87)’; one however does not include them in any Veda. The items nighanta / nirghanta / nighantu / nighandu ‘lexicology / etymology (BHSD), synonymische Wortverzeichnisse (Franke, id.), explanation (PTSD), indices (Rhys Davids, id.), vocabularies (Horner 1957: 317)’ and kaiṭabha / keṭubha ‘ritual science (BHSD), Hilfsbücher (Franke, id.), ritual (PTSD)’ are usually part of the fourth Veda, in two cases of the fifth.

Some passages of the Madhyaṃāgama preserved in Chinese mention five Vedas, but specify the contents of the fifth one in an altogether different way:

[He] has crossed the four classical texts, with the correct literature of profound intelligence on causes and conditions as fifth.621

Here one may suspect that the Atharva-Veda has, implicitly, made its way into this list. If so, this may indicate its relative lateness.

The five Vedas are again, this time explicitly, referred to in an otherwise obscure verse of the Saṃyutta Nikāya (I.29):

pañcaveda (v.l. -vedā) satam samam/
tapassi brāhmaṇācaraṃ (v.l. caraṇti)/

(Note that the prose portions of the Pali canon refer always to five Vedas; only in verse the three Vedas are referred to a few times, and this may be an abbreviation dictated by the demands of metre.)

The five Vedas are enumerated, finally, in the Dīpavamsa (Dīp V.62): ... iruvedaṃ yajuvedaṃ sāmavedaṃ pi nighanduṃ itihāsaṁ ca pañcamam.

In Vedic literature itself we find the five Vedas enumerated at Chāndogya Upaniṣad 7.1.2, 7.1.4, 7.2.1 and 7.7.1. Chāndogya Upaniṣad 7.1.4 reads: rgyvedo yajuvedah sāmaveda atharvanaś ca turtha itihāsapurāṇah pañcamo vedāṇam vedah pitryo rśīr daivo nidhir vākovākyaṃ ekāyanāṃ devaṇīyā brahmaṇīyā bhūtaṇīyā kṣatṛṇīyā naksatṛṇīyā sarpadevaṇīyā. Most of the terms of this list are unknown (see Horsch 1966: 33). It is clear that caturtha ‘the fourth’ refers to a Veda, viz., the Atharva-Veda: the same must therefore be true of ‘the fifth’. (We may follow Horsch, and thus indirectly W., in taking itihāsapurāṇah pañcamo vedāṇīm vedah together, translating ‘itihāsa and purāṇa, which constitute the fifth Veda among the Vedas’. This does not however affect our main argument.)

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620 Sometimes the Madhyaṃāgama mentions four Vedas where the parallel in Pali mentions only three of them; see, e.g., Analayo 2011: 527 n. 3; 2012a: 158 n. 10 [12].
621 TI 26 (vol. 1) p. 663c line 8, p. 680b lines 28-29, p. 685a lines 11-12.
622 Th 1171; SN IV.118; Jā VI.214.
623 Śaṅkara’s comments on ChānU 7.1.2 are intriguing (cf. Horsch 1966: 36). Vedāṇīm vedah is taken as a new item after the fifth Veda, meaning vyākaraṇa, because by means of vyākaraṇa the Rg-Veda etc. are known in their division into pada etc. (vyākaraṇaḥ hi padādvibhāgaśo
The Buddhist enumerations of five Vedas have no place for the Atharva-Veda. The Jaina canonical scriptures contain an enumeration that seems clearly derived from the one used by the Buddhists, but with the Atharva-Veda. Unlike the Chândogya Upaniṣad, it does not simply drop the ‘original’ fourth Veda, but moves it to the sixth place. Itihāsa keeps its traditional fifth place. The result is an enumeration of six Vedas:

\[
\text{riuvveda-jañuvveda-sāmaveda-atharvaṇveda-itihāsapāṃcamāṇam}
\]
\[
\text{nighamṭachāṭhāṇam caîṇhāṇa vēdānaṃ samgovāṃgāṇaṃ sarahassāṇaṃ sārae vārae pārae ...}
\]

Interestingly, an enumeration that is several times repeated in the Brhadāraṇyaka (2.4.10; 4.1.2; 4.5.11 [= ŚPaBr 14.5.4.10; 14.6.10.6; 14.7.3.11]) and Maitrāyaṇīya (6.32) Upaniṣads apparently knows the Atharva-Veda but does not call it a Veda: \(\text{rgvedo yajurvedaḥ sāmavedo 'tharvāṅgirasa itihāsaḥ purāṇaṃ vidyā upaniṣadahaḥ ślokāḥ sūtrāny anuvyākhyanāni vyākhyaṇāni.}\) Three items are called Veda, none of the others are.

This last enumeration counts among a number of Vedic passages that name the Rg-, the Yajur- and the Sāma-Vedas, but not the Atharva-Veda. The terms Rg-Veda, Yajur-Veda and Sāma-Veda also occur in the Aitareya Brāhmaṇa (5.32 [25.7]), the Śadvinśa Brāhmaṇa (1.5.8; 4.1.2), and in three further passages from the Ātapatya Brāhmaṇa (11.5.8.3-6; 12.3.4.9; 14.4.3.12 [= BĀrUp 1.5.5]). It would seem that in these passages the terms Rg-Veda, Yajur-Veda and Sāma-Veda — in the singular — denote what is nowadays also known by the names Rgveda-Samhitā, Yajurveda-Samhitā and Sāmaveda-Samhitā. The non-mention of the Atharva-Veda, as Veda, suggests that its hymns were not collected until after the other three Vedas had been constituted.

A confirmation that the Atharva-Veda did not exist as a collection until long after the other three Vedas had been collected is found in the Chândogya Upaniṣad. Sections 3.1-5 make a number of comparisons, or rather identifications, of which the following are of interest to us. Section 3.1 states that the bees are de rc (pl.), the flower is the Rg-Veda; in 3.2 the bees are the yajus (pl.), the flower is the Yajur-Veda; and in 3.3 the bees are de sāman (pl.), the flower is the Sāma-Veda. The interesting observation comes in section 3.4, where the bees are the atharvāṅgirasaḥ and the flower is itihāsapūrāṇaḥ. In 3.5, finally, the bees are the hidden teachings (guhyā ādesāḥ), which may be the Upaniṣads, and the flower is Brahman (n.). Since the atharvāṅgirasaḥ are the formulas collected in the Atharva-Veda as we know it, the logic of the situation would have required that the flower in 3.4 be identified with the Atharva-Veda. The fact that it is not, strongly suggests that the author of this passage did not know of such a definite collection of atharvans and āngirases. Itihāsa and purāṇa certainly do not designate the Atharva-Veda, neither separately nor jointly (see Horsch 1966: 13f.).

Bloomfield (1899: 2 f.), too, came to the conclusion "that many hymns and prose pieces in the [Atharva-Veda] date from a very late period of Vedic productivity." Indeed, "there is nothing in the way of assuming that the composition of such texts as the

rgvedādaya jñāyante). The result is so close to the enumerations in Avadānasataka and Mahāvastu presented above that it seems likely that Śaṅkara had undergone Buddhist influence in this regard.

624 Viy 2.1.12; 9.33.2; Aupāpātiya Śūtra (ed. Leumann) section 77, and elsewhere, see Charpentier 1914: 28.

625 Note that these expressions are totally unknown to the Vedic texts.
[Aitareya Brāhmaṇa] and [Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa] preceded the redactions of the Atharvan Samhitās."

At least one recension of the Atharva-Veda existed, in its collected form, at the time of Patañjali’s Mahabhāṣya (second half of the second century BCE). This text cites in its opening passage the first lines of the four Vedas. First comes śam no devīr abhiṣṭaye, which begins the Paippalāda version of the Atharva-Veda. Patañjali even informs us of the size of the Atharva-Veda known to him, saying (Mahā-bh vol. 2, p. 378, l. 11; on P. 5.2.37): viṃśino ‘ṅgirasah. This fits the twenty books of the Paippalāda Samhitā. We may conclude from this that the Paippalāda Samhitā existed more or less in its present form in the middle of the second century BCE.

This survey shows two things: First, it demonstrates that the formulas of the Atharva-Veda enter rather late into regular enumerations. And second, it confirms that references to an Atharva-Veda in collected form are later still.

The Atharva-Veda in the Grhyasūtras

The very fact that the Atharva-Veda or its formulas found acceptance in polite society should be interpreted in the light of our earlier reflections: Brahmins who had lost their secure position in society needed these formulas and the accompanying rites in order to create a new living for themselves. We must expect a similar increase of respectability for the Atharva-Veda in the Grhyasūtras. This is indeed what we find.

The first thing to be noted is that, as pointed out by Hermann Oldenberg in 1892 (p. x), “the Atharva-veda Samhitā … may be regarded in the main as a treasure of Grhya verses”. The special connection of the Atharva-Veda with Grhya ritual is emphasized by the fact that, where as a general rule each Grhyasūtra presupposes a previous knowledge of the ritual which is acquired through the study of the corresponding Śrautasūtra, this relation is reversed in the domain of the Atharva-Veda literature: here the Śrautasūtra (the Vaitāṇa Sūtra) presupposes the Grhyasūtra (the Kauṣika Sūtra) (Oldenberg 1892: xxx-xxxi, with p. xxxi n. 1; Gonda 1977: 545, 614).

Several Grhyasūtras refer to the Atharva-Veda as Veda. Śāṅkhāyana (2.10.8), Kauṣītaka,628 (2.6.8), Hiranayakeśin (1.2.8.14), Pāraskara (2.5.13) and Mānava (1.2.6; 1.22.18) clearly indicate that they know four Vedas. Pāraskara (2.10.4-7) and Hiranayakeśin (2.8.19.6) mention the Rg-, Yajur-, Sāma- and Atharva-Vedas by name; so does the Mantrapāṭha that accompanies the Āpastamba Grhyasūtra.629

The above shows that many, if not all, Grhyasūtras give the Atharva-Veda (the collected text) a place in the enumeration of Vedas which it had often been denied by

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626 Note that the Mahabhāṣya also prefers the Paippalāda version of the Atharva-Veda in some citations (see Renou 1953: 463; Rau 1985: 103).
627 Among the texts that explicitly refer to the Atharva-Veda we must mention the later portions of the Milindapaṇiha (Mil 178.15-17: Irubbeḍam Yajubbedam Sāmavedam Athabbaṇavedam lakhaṇaṁ itihāsaṁ purāṇam niḥhandu ketubham akharappabhedam padam veyyākaraṇaṁ …) and perhaps the Arthaśāstra (KAŚ i.3.1-2: sāmargyaurvedās trayas trayi/ atharvavedetihāsaivedau ca vedāḥ).
628 The Kauṣītaka Grhyasūtra, which professes to belong to the same RgVedic tradition as the Śāṅkhāyana Grhyasūtra (Gonda 1977: 606-07), follows the latter “during the greater part of the work, nearly word for word” (Oldenberg 1886: 6).
629 Gonda 1977: 579.
others. Some indications suggest that the *Atharva-Veda* had not just obtained a place in the traditional enumeration, but a place of relative honour.\(^{630}\) This may follow from the name which Śāṅkhāyana (1.16.3) and Kauśītaka (1.10.1) reserve for the *Atharva-Veda*, viz., *Brahma-Veda*. This, as we discussed earlier (§ 1.2.4) may be taken to indicate that these Grhyasūtras looked upon the *Atharva-Veda* as the Veda of the Brahman-priest. We have also seen that the expression *Brahma-Veda* is virtually confined to texts of the *Atharva-Veda*, and this is barely surprising. The Śāṅkhāyana and Kauśītaka Grhyasūtras are the only exceptions to this rule. We concluded from this that the Śāṅkhāyana and Kauśītaka Grhyasūtras accept that there is a special connection between the Brahman-priest and the *Atharva-Veda*. This is important, because there is also a connection between the Brahman-priest and the purohita, the ‘domestic priest’ of the king. The *Vedic Index of Names and Subjects* states the following about it (Macdonell & Keith 1912: II: 7-8, s.v. *Purohita*):

According to Geldner, the Purohita from the beginning acted as the Brahman priest in the sacrificial ritual, being there the general superintendent of the sacrifice. In favour of this view, he cites the fact that Vasiṣṭha is mentioned both as Purohita and as Brahman: at the sacrifice of Śūnhāśepa he served as Brahman, but he was the Purohita of [King] Sudās; Brhaspati is called the Purohita and the Brahman of the gods; and the Vasiṣṭhas who are Purohitas are also the Brahman at the sacrifice. It is thus clear that the Brahman was often the Purohita; and it was natural that this should be the case when once the Brahman’s place became, as it did in later ritual, the most important position at the sacrifice. … Later, no doubt, when the priestly activity ceased to centre in the song, the Purohita, with his skill in magic, became the Brahman, who also required magic to undo the errors of the sacrifice.

In the ritual texts of the *Atharva-Veda*

the office of the Brahman, the fourth priest at the śrauta-ceremonies, who oversees and corrects by means of expiatory formulas (*prāyaścittā*) the accidents and blunders of *hotar*, *udgātar*, and *adhvaryu*, is said to belong to an Atharvavedin, and the *Vaitāṇa-sūtra* in fact exhibits the *bhṛgvaṅgirovid* in possession of that office. … [A] similar claim is advanced in respect to the office of the purohita. Again and again it is stated that the purohita, guru, or brahman of a king, the chaplain or house-priest, shall be conversant with the Atharvan writings, shall be an Atharvan priest …\(^{631}\)

Can we conclude from the above that the authors of the Śāṅkhāyana and Kauśītaka Grhyasūtras — and by extension, the authors of other Grhyasūtras that include the *Atharva-Veda* in their list of now four Vedas — accepted that there was a special link

\(^{630}\) The honour is relative, for not as great as it might have been, given the shared subject-matter of *Atharva-Veda* and Grhyasūtras. Bloomfield (1897: xlv) proposes as explanation that “even the Grhya-rites, popular, nay vulgar, as they must have been in their untrammeled beginnings, were, so to speak, Rishified, and passed through in due time a process of school-treatment which estranged them as far as possible from the specifically Atharvanic connections, and assimilated them, as far as possible, to the Rg-veda, Sāma-veda, and Yajur-veda, as the case may be.”

\(^{631}\) Bloomfield 1897: lviii.
between the office of purohita and the *Atharva-Veda*? It is useful to recall that certain Dharmaśūtras emphasize the need of a purohita to be skilled in Atharvan formulas.⁶³² The *Arthaśāstra*, too, does so.⁶³³ As a matter of fact, it appears that there was “a conscious effort of the Paippalāda brāhmaṇas [of the Atharvaveda] to appear as best suited to be the king’s purohita”, whereas “the Šaṅkana school do not seem to have the same agenda in the redaction of its Samhitā”.⁶³⁴ It appears “that the Paippalādins collected heterogeneous material, taken from various sources and originally also meant for other purposes, to meet the demand for new ‘royal hymns’.”⁶³⁵

Consider in this connection the following observation, drawn from the same article in the *Vedic Index of Names and Subjects* (p. 8): “In historical times [the Purohita] represented the real power of the kingship, and may safely be deemed to have exercised great influence in all public affairs, such as the administration of justice and the king’s conduct of business.” Compare this with the characterization of a court of justice (sabhā) in the *Pāraskara Grhyasūtra* (3.13.2) as sāṅgirasi “related to Āṅgiras or to the Āṅgirases”. It is far from evident what Āṅgiras or the Āṅgirases have to do with the court of justice, unless we consider that the author of this Sūtra assumed that Atharvan priests had a closer connection with the court than others. This would be a matter of course if the Brahman-priests had come to be looked upon as particularly apt to play the role of royal purohita.⁶³⁶

*The Atharva-Veda in the Mahābhārata*

The *Atharva-Veda* occupies a respected position in the *Mahābhārata*, too. About the general relationship of this epic to Vedic literature we can do no better than cite *The Sanskrit Epics* by John Brockington (1998: 7-9):

> References to the Vedas in general terms are found not uncommonly in the *Mahābhārata* and are spread relatively evenly. Anything more explicit, even the listing of the three or four Vedas or mention of Vedas along with Vedaṅgas, tends to be concentrated in the more didactic or otherwise later parts of the text. Thus, … the sound of the *Yajur, Rg* and *Sāma Vedas* along with prose — in the context probably the Brāhmaṇas are meant — rises from hermitages at 3.27.3ab;⁶³⁷ the

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⁶³² So Yājñavalkya Dharmaśāstra 1.312; Gautama Dharmaśāstra 11.17.
⁶³³ KAŚ 1.9.9 (tr. Olivelle 2013: 74): purohitam uditotakulasīlam sānge vede daive nimitte dandantīyām cābhiviṁtam āpadaṁ daivamānuṣīnām atharvabhīr upāyaiś ca pratikartāram kurvita “He should appoint as Chaplain a man who comes from a very distinguished family and has an equally distinguished character, who is thoroughly trained in the Veda together with the limbs, in divine omens, and in government, and who could counteract divine and human adversities through Atharvan means.” Malamoud (2012: 625) observes, in connection with the *Arthaśāstra*: “L’Atharvaveda est bien, comme on peut s’y attendre, l’intersection du corpus védique, de la śrutī comme fondement du dharma brahmanique, et du monde multiforme de la māyā.”
⁶³⁵ On the distinction between civil and criminal courts in ancient India, see now Olivelle 2012a.
⁶³⁶ Mbh 3.27.3: yajuṣāṃṛcāmca sāmnāṁca gadyānāṁ caiva sarvaśāh/ āśīd eucāryamānānām nisvano hṛdayamangah.
four Vedas with the Aṅgas and Upāṅgas are put on a par with truth at 3.61.16ab;638 ... the Sāma, Yajur and Rg Vedas were absent in the Kṛtayuga but in the Dwāparayuga there are four Vedas and men know four, three, two, one or none (3.148.13a639 and 26-27,640 in the Tīrthayātrāparvan); Nārāyana declares to Mārkaṇḍeya that he produced the Rgveda, Sāmaveda, Yajurveda and the Atharvans at 3.187.14ab.641 In ... Nārada’s description of the celestial halls the Rgveda, Sāmaveda, Yajurveda, Atharvaveda, as well as Upavedas and Vedāṅgas are there (2.11.23-24);642 within the Sanatsujātiya Brahman is not in the Rg, Yajur, Atharva or Sāma Vedas (5.44.21ab).643 Alongside such listings of four Vedas, the following pāda giving just the three Vedas may be noted: rco yajūṃṣi sāmāni at 9.35.33a644 (in the less well known Tīrthayātrāparvan narrating Balarāma’s pilgrimage, which also refers to the muni Sārasvata’s recitation of the Vedas at 9.50.2-3645) and 12.243.2e646 (also at 1 App. 1.23 pr., and in different wording at 6.31.17d647 and 12.230.8b648). However, to set against this, there are a number of separate references to the Atharvaveda, of which perhaps the most notable is that the group of spells given to Kunti by which she can bring the gods to her is revealed in the Atharvasiras649 (3.289.20cd);650 others occur at 1.64.33651, 5.18.7-8652 (Atharvāṅgiras), 8.49.69ab (atharvāṅgiras [!] hy eṣā śrutinām uttamā śrutiḥ), 13.10.34a (atharvavede vede ca, making a distinction between it and the rest) and 13.95.75c = 96.44c (with mention in the first half of the verse of Advaryu and Chandoga). ... [In the Bhagavadgīta Kṛṣṇa declares that he is the

638 Mhbh 3.61.16: catvāra ekato vedāḥ sāngopāṅgāḥ savistarāḥ/ svadhītā mānavaṃśreṣṭha satyam ekāṃ kilakataḥ.
640 Mhbh 3.148.26-27: dvāpare ’pi vuge dharmo dvibhāgonah pravartate/ viṣṇur vai pūtatāṃ yāti caturdhā veda eva ca/ tato ’nye ca caturvedās trivedās ca tathāpare/ dvivedās caikavedās cāpy anrcaṁ ca tathāpare/
641 Mhbh 3.187.14: rghveda sāmavedās ca yajurvedo ’py atharvanāḥ/ mattaḥ prādurbhavanty ete mām eva pravasiṇāh ca.
642 Mhbh 2.11.23: rghveda sāmavedās ca yajurvedas ca pāṇḍava/ atharvavedas ca tathā parvāni ca viśēm pate.
643 Mhbh 5.44.21: naivarkṣaḥ tan na japuṣu nāpy atharvasu/ na caiva drṣyaty amaleṣu sāmasu.
644 Mhbh 9.35.33: rco yajūṃṣi sāmāni manasā cintayan muniḥ
645 Mhbh 9.50.3: yatra dvādāśavārṣikyāṃ anāvṛṣtyāṃ dvijottaman/ vedān adhyāpayām āsa purā sārasvato muniḥ.
647 Mhbh 6.31.17: pitāham asya jagato mātā dhātā pitāmahan/ vedayam pavitram omkāra ṅkāra ṅkāma yajur eva ca.
648 Mhbh 12.230.8: aprthagadarsinah sarve rksāmasu yajuṣu ca.
649 Note the variant atharvāṅgiris, and cf. Bloomfield 1897: xvii.
651 Mhbh 1.64.33: atharvavedapravaraḥ pūgayaṅkīnā Samatathā/ samhitām irāyantine mā padakramayutam tu te.
652 Mhbh 5.18.6-7: tatas tu bhagavān indraḥ prahrśṭāḥ samapadyata/ varāṃ ca pradadu tasmai atharvāṅgirase tadā/ atharvāṅgirasam nāma asmin vede bhavisyati.
Sāmaveda of the Vedas (6.32.22ab)\textsuperscript{653}, the pitrmedha is celebrated for the dead warriors with sāmans (11.26.39c, cf. sāmnāṃ rcām ca nādena at 40a) and at 13.14.159ab the Sāmaveda is supreme among the Vedas, just as the Śatarudrīya is among the Yajur hymns.

Brockington’s observations, though useful, have to be read with care, for they do not distinguish between different kinds of mantras (e.g. rc, yajus, sāman) on one hand, and the Vedas that carry their names (e.g., Rg-Veda, Yajur-Veda, Sāma-Veda) on the other.\textsuperscript{654} If we concentrate on the latter, we find that none of the passages referred to merely enumerate the usual three Vedas (Rg-Veda, Yajur-Veda and Sāma-Veda), two of them mention four Vedas without specifying which ones are meant (3.61.16; 3.148.26), one enumerates the four Vedas as Rg-Veda, Sāma-Veda, Yajur-Veda and Atharva-Veda (2.11.23), and one gives the following enigmatic enumeration: \textit{rvedah sāmavedaś ca yajurvedo 'py atharvanaḥ} (3.187.14). If we translate this, with Van Buitenen (1975: 591), as “Rg-Veda, Sāma-Veda, Yajur-Veda and the Atharvans” the suggestion is conveyed that the Atharva-Veda, unlike the other Vedas, either did not exist, or was not thought of as a collection. This interpretation is however far from certain.\textsuperscript{655} Some of the passages that only refer to the Atharva-Veda maintain the ambiguity as to its collected nature (3.289.20; 8.49.69). (Since the use of plural nouns, usually \textit{atharvāṅgirasah}, to refer to the Atharva-Veda continued for a long time, one should be careful in drawing chronological conclusions from it; see Bloomfield 1897: xvii.) One, finally, speaks of the Samhitā of the Atharva-Veda and its Pada- and Krama-pātha (1.64.33: \textit{samhitāṃ ... padakramayūtām}).\textsuperscript{656} Here the Atharva-Veda is clearly thought of as a collected whole.

Brockington’s sample of passages,\textsuperscript{657} then, creates the impression that the Atharva-Veda has in the Mahābhārata taken a place on a par with the three other Vedas, even though it is still sometimes referred to as if it was not yet a finished collection of hymns.\textsuperscript{658}

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\textsuperscript{653} Mhbh 6.32.22: \textit{vedānāṃ sāmavedo 'smi devānām asmi vāsavaḥ}.

\textsuperscript{654} If we assume, with the Mīmāṃsākōsa (VI p. 3089), that there are three and only three kinds of (Vedic) mantras — viz., rc, yajus and sāman — then the mantras in the Atharva-Veda, too, belong to these three categories. As a matter of fact, the Atharva-Veda shares a fair number of mantras with the Rg-Veda. Note however that the authors of the Mahābhārata may not always strictly distinguish between mantras and Vedas; an example is 5.43.1ab: \textit{rcō yajūmsy adhitē yah sāmavedaṃ ca yo dvijaḥ}.

\textsuperscript{655} The normal plural of \textit{atharvan} is \textit{atharvān} rather than \textit{atharvanaḥ}. We might therefore translate “the Rg-Veda, the Sāma-Veda, the Yajur-Veda and [the Veda] of Atharvan”. Alternatively, we may interpret (with Bloomfield, 1897: xxv) \textit{atharvanaḥ} as a variant of \textit{ātharvanah}, in which case we have to translate “the Rg-Veda, the Sāma-Veda, the Yajur-Veda and the Atharva-[Veda]”.

\textsuperscript{656} Note that the word \textit{samhitā} in Vedic literature always means \textit{sandhi}, so that the \textit{samhitā-pātha} of a Vedic text is its version with \textit{sandhi}, different from its \textit{pada-pātha} (version consisting of separate words) and other versions. The use of \textit{samhitā} in this line from the Mahābhārata appears to be an early manifestation of the later usage, in which \textit{samhitā} means “collection”.

\textsuperscript{657} We may add Mhbh 8.24.80-81, which mentions Rg-Veda, Sāma-Veda, itihāsayajurvedau (!) and \textit{atharvāṅgirasau}.

\textsuperscript{658} Similarly Bloomfield, 1897: lii: “The position of the Atharvan in the Mahābhārata may be characterised in the single statement that its importance as a Veda, and its canonicity, are finally and completely established”. Bloomfield, 1897: lii gives a long list of Mahābhārata passages that mention the four Vedas, one of them being the Atharva-Veda.
IIB.2.2. The authorship of the *Mahābhārata*

An alternative to Sukthankar’s thesis

Some eighty years have passed since V. S. Sukthankar published his article “The Bhṛgus and the Bhārata: a text-historical study” (1936). Brockington resumed its main thesis in the following words (1998: 155-56):

The process of transformation seems in the case of both epics to be linked with passing from the hands of their traditional reciters, the sūtas and *kuśīlavas*, into those of the brāhmans as the guardians of all traditional learning. In a seminal article, Sukthankar elucidates the role of the Bhārgavas in the amplification of the *Mahābhārata* and in particular its brahmanisation. He goes through the text, section by section, noting the evidence for Bhārgava influence whenever it appears. For example, within the Ādīparvan, Sukthankar identified the *Aurvopākhyaṇa* (1.169-173) with its Bhārgava hero as ‘a digression within a digression’; in the *Subhāparvan* there are only brief mentions of Bhārgavas, usually included in lists of those present on various occasions, whereas the *Āranyakaparvan* has a considerable amount of Bhārgava material incorporated into it. The largest amount of Bhārgava material is included in the *Anuśāsanaparvan*.

As his name Bhārgava indicates, Rāma Jāmadagnya is the hero of the Bhṛgu group of brāhmans, who were especially connected with the inflation of the *Mahābhārata* after supplanting the sūtas and through it with bolstering the claims to superiority of the brāhmans. … [M]ost of the Bhārgava inflations, such as the extreme emphasis on Rāma Jāmadagnya, remain and Sukthankar thought that the *Mahābhārata* only passed from their control when the last four books were being added. Thus, Rāma Jāmadagnya’s participation in epic events results from interpolation and accounts of his massacre of the *kṣatriyas* are intended to emphasise Bhārgava control over the epic itself, reflecting not a military but a literary struggle.

Sukthankar’s article has exerted a major influence on *Mahābhārata* studies during subsequent years, with many scholars accepting its main thesis. This thesis, to put it briefly, is that the Bhārgavas — i.e. the real historical Bhārgavas, not the Bhārgavas that figure in stories in the epic — played an important role in the amplification and brahmanisation of the *Mahābhārata*. Bhārgava control over the epic only passed onto others when the last four books were added.

Sukthankar’s article expresses this thesis most explicitly perhaps on p. 74: “The infiltration of masses of Bhārgava material in the shape of Bhārgava myths and legends, the manner of its treatment, and even that strange admixture of the Epic with the Dharma and Nīti elements … thus appears[s] to find a simple and straightforward explanation in the assumption of an important unitary diaskewasis of the epic under very strong and direct Bhārgava influence.” (Sukthankar’s emphasis). Its attraction to subsequent scholarship is clear from Goldman’s remark, made in 1977 (p. 2) that “[t]his theory has proven basic to all subsequent study of the *Mahābhārata*.”
Sukthankar’s assumption, his main thesis, is not the only one capable of explaining the abundant Bhārgava material in the Mahābhārata. Exactly the same facts allow, I propose, of an altogether different explanation. Sukthankar’s thesis explains literary features with the help of an assumed historical situation. This assumed historical situation is based on these literary features only, and is not confirmed by independent evidence. The alternative explanation I will suggest is based on the historical situation as depicted in this book, a situation in which Brahmanism had to assert itself in unfavorable circumstances. The importance of the Atharva-Veda has already been pointed out in the preceding chapter. The following reflections will take this importance as point of departure.

Since the Mahābhārata is at least in part a mythological text, it will be interesting to see which are the mythological sages prominently associated with the Atharva-Veda. These are, above all, Atharvan, Āṅgiras and Bṛggu. Of these three, the Gopatha Brāhmaṇa (1.1.4-5 and 7-8) narrates that the first two were created by Brahma, that twenty Atharvanic and Āṅgirasic descendent sages emanated from them, and that finally the Ātharvana Veda was produced by the Atharvans, the Āṅgirasa Veda by the Āṅgirasas. The compound bhṛgvaṅgirasah makes its appearance later, and only in Atharvan texts. Bṛggu has the tendency to replace Atharvan in the Atharvanic tradition.

We know that Bṛggu and his descendents play a major role in the Mahābhārata. However, Āṅgiras and his descendants do so, too. Brockington (1998: 156) says the following about it:

N. J. Shende, from a count of references to individual brāhmans, demonstrates the greater frequency of mention of the Āṅgirasas, even than of the Bṛggu. To these may be added the narrative by Mārkandeya about the origin of the fires and the role of Āṅgiras as an Atharvan. Shende therefore modifies Sukthankar’s hypotheses by suggesting that ‘the Bṛgvaṅgirases were jointly responsible for the final redaction of the Mahābhārata’.

From among the major Brahmanical families, the Bṛggu are mentioned 1’500 times in the Mahābhārata, the Āṅgiras 3’200 times, and each of the remaining families less than a hundred times. Shende draws from this a conclusion similar to Sukthankar’s. He concludes that the Āṅgirasas were co-responsible for the redaction of the Mahābhārata. Since he does not contest Sukthankar’s findings, he ends up with a joint responsibility, shared by Bhārgavas and Āṅgirasas.

Enough preparatory work has been done by now to see that this conclusion is not the only one possible. The fact that the Bhārgavas and the Āṅgirasas, just these two, outcompete all other Brahmanical families in the Mahābhārata can hardly be historical coincidence. These two families represent, in the Indian imagination of that time, the supernatural powers associated with the formulas of the Atharva-Veda. We have seen

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659 See, e.g., Minkowski 1991: 399: “neither Sukthankar nor any subsequent proponent of this theory … has presented any epigraphical, textual or other historical evidence independent of the epic that demonstrates the existence of a distinct Bhārgava movement.”

660 Bloomfield 1897: xxii-xxiii.

661 Bloomfield 1897: xxvi-xxvii.

662 Reference to Shende 1943.

663 It is not to be forgotten that Bhārgava and Āṅgirasa are gotra names, not confined to Brahmins with links to the Atharva-Veda; cf. Proferes 2003; 2007: 6-13; Mahadevan 2011.
that these powers, rather than those associated with the solemn ritual, were vital for the Brahmins of that time in order to regain a position of respect in society. The Mahābhārata, too, was meant to serve that purpose. It could do so by showing, through the intermediary of stories, what enormous powers Brahmins possessed. The powers concerned were primarily those associated with atharvan formulas, and were therefore most appropriately exemplified through the feats of those who were particularly closely connected with those powers, viz., the Bhārgavas and the Āṅgirasas.

Recall that the intended audience of the epic included worldly rulers, those whom the Brahmins would call Kṣatriyas. Brahmins had to get the message across that they, in spite of appearances, had powers comparable to or even exceeding those of kings. The Mahābhārata shows this by recounting what their most powerful representatives had done. These most powerful representatives of the Brahmins were, and could not but be, Bhārgavas and Āṅgirasas, the masters par excellence of atharvanic powers.

It is easy to show this for the Bhārgavas, who have received more scholarly attention than the Āṅgirasas. The most famous example is the Bhārgava Rāma Jāmadagnya, who destroyed all the Kṣatriyas thrice seven times over.664 This historical fact — it is presented as one — “is mentioned ten times, in nearly identical form” in the Mahābhārata; what is more, “the humiliation of the pride of the Kṣatriyas by the Bhārgava Rāma is mentioned about a score of times”.665 This should be enough to convince any ruler that displeasing a Brahmin might carry serious risks for him. The story of the Bhārgava Aurva, who almost committed a similar act of total destruction, would further remind him that the only way to avoid such a fate was mollification of the Brahmin concerned.666

More frequently the Bhārgavas, and the Āṅgirasas with them, use other means to guarantee success in battle to those whose sides they are on, viz., secret magical weapons.

These same stories recall that Brahmins can basically do what they like, and get away with it. The Bhārgavas provide, once again, a particular clear example. To cite Goldman (1977: 5): “The central concerns of the Bhrgus appear from the mythology to have included death, violence, sorcery, confusion and violation of class-roles (varnāśrama-dharma), intermarriage with other varṇas (varṇasaṃkara), and open hostility to the gods themselves. In addition, several of the Bhārgava sages are shown in the epic to have engaged with impunity in such activities as theft, drinking liquor, and killing a woman, acts that are condemned unequivocally in the law texts as especially improper for brahmanas.” This shows that Brahmins have the power to do what they please, and it is only by their good grace that they often follow the rules which they have themselves laid down in their treatises.

All this only makes sense, of course, if we keep in mind that the ideal audience of the epic is not constituted by other Brahmins, but by worldly rulers.667 Brahmins are not encouraging each other to break their self-imposed rules; they rather remind their rulers that they can choose not to obey them, and there is nothing anyone can do to stop them.

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666 See Goldman 1977: 11 f.
667 According to Hegarty (2012: 189), "the Mahābhārata successfully institutionalized itself to the extent that it was used by kings and Brahmins for acts of both self-legitimation and selfexploration for centuries, indeed millennia, to come".
It follows from our preceding reflections that the important roles played in the *Mahābhārata* by Bhārgavas and Āṅgirasas have nothing to do with the participation of these two groups of Brahmins in the composition, or rather brahmanisation, of this text, but rather are concerned with the image its redactors wished to project of Brahmins. This image was best served by an increased emphasis on the Brahmanical powers that were associated with the *Atharva-Veda*, and consequently by the regular presence in the stories of the Brahmins who were most intimately connected with this Veda.\footnote{So Hiltebeitel 1999. See also Simson 2011: 642 f.}
III. EXTERNAL INFLUENCE

Part II has tried to present what might be considered Brahmanism's core vision. As behaves Brahmanism's claim to independence, this core vision was mainly developed independently of outside influence. The new Brahmanism was not, of course, immune to outside influence. Right from the beginning it was in constant interaction with surrounding cultures, so much so that its core vision slowly but certainly became overlaid with features that were not part of the original vision, and sometimes in plain contradiction with it. The present Part III will deal with some of these features.

Brahmanism borrowed in more ways from its surroundings than can be dealt with here. We had occasion to mention local cults and traditions that it incorporated in the course of time (see, e.g., § 1.1.3, above). In Greater Magadha some features were discussed that Brahmanism borrowed from the cultural region to its east ('Greater Magadha'), among them the notion of cyclic time, Kapila (and with him presumably the fundamentals of the Sāmkhya philosophy), and most importantly: the idea of rebirth and karmic retribution. In this Part something more will be said about the way in which Brahmanism incorporated rebirth and karmic retribution, followed by an analysis of the elements that gave rise to Brahmanical philosophy. A final chapter will discuss the origin of the Indian theater.

III.1. Karma and the individual

Part II of Greater Magadha dealt with "Brahmanism vis-à-vis rebirth and karmic retribution", so there is no need to discuss here the influence that the doctrine of karma — which had not been part of the Brahmanical tradition until it came into contact with the culture of Greater Magadha — came to exert on Brahmanical culture. The present chapter will merely look at one area in which there was a fundamental difference of outlook between traditional Brahmanism and the belief in rebirth and karmic retribution, and at the manner in which the former dealt with that difference. This is the area of the individual.

Two scholars in particular have made claims about individualization in ancient India: Louis Dumont and J. C. Heesterman.

Dumont believed that there was a fundamental opposition in India between the renouncer and the man in the world.669 (He presented this opposition as characterizing Indian society throughout most of its history, but in fact his thoughts concerned the late-Vedic period and the beginnings of Buddhism and Jainism in particular, i.e., the centuries preceding the Common Era.670) The renouncers of that period, according to Dumont, did not only have individuality, they also were, perhaps as a result, responsible for all religious and other innovations that took place in India during that time. The question is: Does Dumont's theory satisfactorily explain the situation depicted in the early texts?

Were the great religious discoveries he talks about — primarily the new ideas expressed in the Upaniṣads, the origin of Buddhism and Jainism, etc. — invented by renouncers? Or had these people become renouncers because of prior convictions and ideas with which they had grown up? Dumont takes it for granted that the renouncers he talks about —

670 Bronkhorst 1997a; 1999b.
including the Buddha and the Jina — came from a Vedic milieu. They had become renouncers (Dumont does not tell us why), as a result of which they subsequently introduced new ideas and innovations into Indian thought and religion, prominently among these the belief in rebirth and karmic retribution. They could become innovators by virtue of the fact that they renounced the Vedic milieu. We will see that in reality the historical situation was more complex.\textsuperscript{671}

One might take a position different from Dumont and assume the opposite. One could consider that the Vedic tradition itself developed the theory of rebirth and karmic retribution, which in its turn inspired certain people to become renouncers. This is the position of J. C. Heesterman, who articulates this point of view in an article that was reprinted in a volume called \textit{The Inner Conflict of Tradition} (1985). Heesterman, like Dumont, believes that a conflict is to be assumed to explain these and other developments in Indian thought. But contrary to Dumont, his conflict is an ‘inner conflict’. That is to say, it is not a conflict between different groups in Indian society — renouncers and men-in-the-world — but rather a conflict that is inherent in the single Vedic tradition.

Heesterman develops this idea in an article "Brahmin, ritual, and renouncer", which is chapter two of his book \textit{The Inner Conflict of Tradition}, mentioned earlier. He there derives the Upaniṣadic karma doctrine from certain presumed developments in the Vedic sacrifice (p. 34 f.). The interiorization of the ritual, moreover, is presented as the logical conclusion of its ongoing \textit{individualization} (p. 38 f.). And here we touch, still according to Heesterman, the principle of world renunciation. To quote his own words (p. 41-42):

\begin{quote}
The difference between classical ritualism and renunciation seems to be a matter rather of degree than of principle. The principle is the \textit{individualization} [emphasis added, JB] of the ritual, which could not but lead to its interiorization.
\end{quote}

The emergence of renunciation, also according to Heesterman, has been of crucial importance in the development of Indian religious thinking. To substantiate this claim, which he does not further elaborate, Heesterman refers without comments in a note to Dumont's article "World renunciation in Indian religions", whose content we considered above. It would seem that Heesterman agrees with Dumont's thesis to the extent that renouncers have been responsible for most of the discoveries and innovations in Indian religious life. He disagrees, however, with respect to the Brahmin, whom Dumont views as the opposite of the renouncer, while Heesterman puts him on a par with the renouncer.\textsuperscript{672} Renunciation, in Heesterman's opinion, can be understood as a development of Vedic thought. Both he and Dumont would probably agree that individualization came about in opposition to the predominant Vedic tradition, either in those who renounced Vedic society and left it (Dumont), or within that tradition as a result of certain internal developments (Heesterman).

Perhaps it is the sociological orientation of these two scholars — Dumont and Heesterman — that leads them to identify the aim of renunciation with "liberation from

\textsuperscript{671} A link between individuality and renunciation is still presupposed in Peter Sloterdijk 2009 (\textit{Du muß dein Leben ändern}), where it speaks of “die Erfindung des Individuums durch die isolierende Hervorhebung seines Wirkungs- und Erlebenskreises aus dem Kreis aller anderen Welttatsachen” (p. 350) and “Geburt des Individuums aus dem Geist der Rezession” (p. 353).

\textsuperscript{672} Heesterman 1985: 231-32 n.32.
the fetters of life as commonly experienced in this world”, as Dumont puts it; Heesterman describes the renouncer as "emancipated from the relations which govern [the world]" (p. 39). Descriptions like these tend to make one overlook the aims the early texts themselves ascribe to the renouncers. It turns out that not all renouncers pursue the same goal. What is more, the English term ‘renouncer’ is not the translation of any one single Sanskrit term.673 There are a number of Sanskrit terms more or less corresponding to ‘renouncer’ that are not however treated as synonyms in the texts.674 As so often, the urge to translate Indian expressions into expressions which are meaningful to the modern investigator, is responsible here for a failure to understand the texts on their own terms.

Dumont explained the main religious developments in ancient India with the help of an opposition between people who left the world, i.e. renouncers, and those who stayed there. Heesterman postulated a similar opposition, but one present within single individuals.

Evidence is growing that neither Dumont nor Heesterman had it right. The innovations concerned (to which I will return below) did not arise in one single tradition, but were largely the result of two different cultures that were situated in different parts of northern India and came to influence each other, ever more strongly, during the centuries preceding the Common Era. These two cultures were centred in two different regions of the Ganges valley. Beside Vedic culture, centred in its western parts, there was another culture to its east, centred in Greater Magadha, i.e., Magadha and surroundings.675 Magadha is often depicted in Brahmanical texts as a region unfit for Brahmans. This did not prevent it from becoming one of the centres of the first great empire that the subcontinent had ever seen: the Maurya Empire that for the first time united almost the whole of India. Magadha and surroundings are moreover the area where the Buddha and the Jina — the founders of Buddhism and Jainism respectively — preached their messages. An important characteristic of the culture of Greater Magadha that distinguished it from Vedic culture was the belief in rebirth and karmic retribution. Buddhism and Jainism, and other religious movements in Greater Magadha, all shared a common aim: putting an end to rebirths. The paths toward this goal taught by the different teachers, including the Buddha and the Jina, often consisted in various forms of asceticism and renunciation. These paths, including the ones preferred in Buddhism and Jainism, were paths toward liberation from rebirth, not, or not primarily, freedom from society.

The goal to put an end to rebirths, and the paths supposedly leading there, came to exert an influence on late-Vedic culture, but this took time, partly because the problem these paths were meant to solve — i.e., the belief in rebirth and karmic retribution — was not part of Vedic tradition. Late-Vedic tradition came to accept this belief in some of its texts, and with it variants of the partly renunciatory paths that were based on it. Accepting this belief was apparently a difficult process, for even a thousand years after its first appearance in the Vedic Upanisads we still find Brahmanical currents that do not accept it. This process accounts in part for the institution of renunciation that finds expression in some late-Vedic texts.

673 "Sehr grosszügig fasst Dumont in der Institution des ‘renouncer’ aber auch alle anderen indischen Formen des Asketen-, Mystiker- und Mönchtums zusammen, ohne in irgendeiner Weise genauer zu unterscheiden." (Fuch 1988: 417)
674 The Sanskrit term that literally corresponds closest to English ‘renouncer’ is samnyāsin. This term enters relatively late into the relevant literature, and refers to the renunciation of the sacred fire by the person who opts for the fourth āśrama (see below).
675 All this has been argued in great detail in Greater Magadha.
But this is only part of the picture. During and after the Maurya Empire, and beginning perhaps already before it, Vedic religion underwent a transformation that led to Brahmanism, an ideology that in the course of some thousand years was to become the predominant socio-political ideology of the whole of South Asia and much of Southeast Asia as well. Central in this ideology is the hereditary class of Brahmins, who in due time succeeded in making themselves indispensable in social and political life. This ideology is borne by the idea of the Brahmin as a superior being who owes nothing to society, whereas society owes everything to him. The ideal Brahmin, though in possession of great powers, often chooses to live in a hermitage (āśrama) separate from the human world. Unlike the Buddhist and Jaina renouncers, who survived by begging for food, the Brahmanical hermit does not beg and does not accept anything whatsoever from society. He survives on the roots and fruits he finds in the forest, and spends almost all of his time engaged in sacrificial rituals.

This type of Brahmanical hermit is often, though not always, called vānaprastha ‘forest-dweller’ in the relevant texts. His way of life corresponds to Brahmanical ideology in that the forest-dweller is independent of society and its products. It is at the same time clear that in its strict form the Brahmanical forest-dweller is an ideal rather than a possible way of life. It is open to doubt whether anyone can survive for long on a vegetarian diet consisting (largely or wholly) of roots and fruits found in the forest, especially if one is expected to spend most of one’s time engaged in various Vedic rites, maintaining the Vedic fire all along. But real or not real, the Brahmanical forest-dweller exerted an enormous influence on popular imagination — epics like the Mahābhārata know large numbers of forest-dwellers — and induced countless rulers to provide Brahmins with places where they could engage in their pious pursuits, with this difference that a village was normally part of the deal: the inhabitants of the village had to direct the taxes that normally went to the king to the Brahmins concerned. The ideal of the isolated forest-dweller gave, in historical reality, rise to Brahmins who ruled over villages. At present we are however concerned with the ideal, not with what it became in historical reality.

The vānaprastha is a completely Brahmanical creation, closely linked to the image that Brahmanism projected of itself. There was no place for vānaprasthas outside

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676 This does not mean that people did not try to live as closely to the ideal as possible. A similar observation can be made with respect to the Buddhist ideal of living alone, "like (the horn of) a rhinoceros". Strangely, Clarke (2014: 6 with p. 174 n. 39) appears to object to understanding the exhortation as evidence of actual Buddhist practice in India, at least by some.
677 Cf. *Buddhism in the Shadow of Brahmanism* p. 76 n. 125: "It is possible to wonder, with Annemarie Mertens (2005: 255 n. 95), whether there really were Brahmanical ascetics. As she puts it: "Denkbar wäre ..., dass [die brahmanischen Asketen] lediglich ein weiteres ‘Konstrukt’ der beiden Gruppen (i.e., Brahmins and Buddhists, JB) darstellen, das ihnen zur eigenen Profilierung diente". It would indeed be interesting to know whether the ecological conditions of the Indian subcontinent make it possible for an individual to survive on nothing but the fruits and roots which he comes across in his corner of the forest, without any access to the agricultural products of society (and without the use of animal products); yet this is what the normative texts suggest. Wrangham (2009: ch. 1) shows that survival in the wild without cooking is scarcely if at all possible for humans. And the BBC television series ‘Wild Food’ by Ray Mears (2007) reminds us of the massive amount of time hunter-gatherers require to find and prepare their food; this hardly corresponds to the image of the peaceful life of the Brahmanical ascetic in his āśrama who, moreover, is not supposed to hunt."
Brahmanism. Neither Buddhism nor Jainism knows that kind of renouncer. At the same time this is the only kind of ascetic that fully renounces society: the vānaprastha is totally independent of society, and needs nothing from it; he does not even beg for his food, and dresses in forest products, primarily the bark of trees.\footnote{Olivelle (2011a: 12) cites Gautama Dharmaśūtra 3.26-35: “An anchorite [here called vaikhānasa, JB] shall live in the forest, living on roots and fruits and given to austerities. He kindles the sacred fire according to the procedure for recluses and refrains from eating what is grown in a village. He may also avail himself of the flesh of animals killed by predators. He should not step on plowed land or enter a village. He shall wear matted hair and clothes of bark or skin and never eat anything that has been stored for more than a year.” See further Olivelle 2011a: 48 f.}

But the other kind of ascetic, the one who pursues the end of rebirths and survives by begging, came to influence Brahmanism as well. The result is that the classical texts of Brahmanism present different kinds of renunciation: renunciation of the type of the vānaprastha, and renunciation of the wandering religious beggar who aims for the end of rebirths. The earliest of these texts present the two as a choice. Later on the two are incorporated in a temporal succession of four life stages: after religious studies and the subsequent founding of a family, the aging father then becomes a vānaprastha, and toward the end of his life he becomes a wandering religious mendicant. This sequence is completely artificial (at least toward its end), and may never have been followed, but it did become part of orthodoxy. The stages are now called āśrama (very confusing, since āśrama can also mean ‘hermitage’), and the rule of the āśramas (āśramadharma) became, along with the rule of caste-classes (varṇa), almost as good as a definition of Hinduism: varnāśrama-dharma.

The above may seem somewhat schematic, but it does, I believe, bring out the fundamental issues involved. People renounced for different reasons, and these reasons depended on what aim they were pursuing. The purely Brahmanical form of renunciation strove to total independence of society, and the texts repeatedly specify that its reward is heaven. Others renounced for reasons that were initially not Brahmanical, viz., liberation from rebirths and karmic retribution. Those who looked for liberation from rebirths and karmic retribution used methods — most typically: the practice of inaction, i.e., motionlessness — that obliged them to live away from society; this break was not however complete, and did not prevent these renouncers from returning to society to beg for food. Buddhism subsequently developed monasteries and monastic institutions that placed the monastic community right in the middle of society, and other groups of renouncers followed their example.

Where does all this leave us with regard to the theories of Dumont and Heesterman? Both missed the point in an essential manner. The innovations of the pre-Common Era centuries were not the result of prior renunciation, but rather the opposite: renunciation was the result of the particular visions of reality that were held in the communities into which future renouncers were born. Classical Brahmanism depicted Brahmins as being fundamentally superior to and independent of all other human beings, and the notion of a Brahmin renouncer who lived that way was an essential part of this idea. The religious currents of Greater Magadha, on the other hand, started from the belief that acts (karma) lead to endless rebirths; one can only put a stop to these if one somehow manages to put a stop to those acts. This was only possible, if at all, outside society. The subsequent interaction of these different ideas and ideals led to a multitude of forms of renunciation, but the underlying concerns remain visible in most of them.
An important question remains. Individualization implies personal responsibility for one's acts. This, if I understand it correctly, is how Dumont thought about it. In 1981 he brought out an article "La genèse chrétienne de l'individualisme moderne, une vue modifiée de nos origines", that two years later became part of his book *Essais sur l'individualisme* (1983).\(^{679}\) He talks here about an ‘individu-en-relation-à-Dieu’ and about ‘individualisme absolu’. I do not claim to fully understand Dumont,\(^{680}\) but it seems clear that he talks here about things such as individual responsibility. But personal responsibility for one's acts is the most characteristic feature of the doctrine of karmic retribution: one's own deeds determine one's own future, in this or a next life. This particular conviction underlies the religious currents that originated in Greater Magadha (and only later did it find its way into Brahmanism). It is the very reason for the existence of Buddhism, Jainism and other similar currents. It was not invented by renouncers, but was the reason why they became renouncers to begin with. In other words, the belief in karmic retribution was widely held, also among laypeople, in parts of eastern India. What are the implications for the question of individualization?

Unfortunately we know little or nothing about the way in which the notion of rebirth and karmic retribution came about. Earlier generations of scholars have tried to explain it as a development within Vedic thought. This is no longer possible, because we now have strong reasons to believe that this notion developed outside the Vedic tradition: the few late-Vedic texts that are acquainted with this notion (i.e., some passages in the oldest Upaniṣads) betray the influence they underwent from the culture of Greater Magadha. We do not know why and when the belief in rebirth and karmic retribution became part of the culture of Greater Magadha.

Be this as it may, the inhabitants of this region shared a belief that held them individually responsible for their acts: only their own acts and no one else's would determine in what form and conditions they would be reborn in a future life. This induced certain individuals to take destiny into their own hands, for example by becoming ascetics. This led to the appearance of various new religious movements. Three of these we know by name — Buddhism, Jainism and Ajivikism — but there are clear indications that there were others. These religious movements proposed different solutions to the shared fear of endless numbers of rebirths. The solutions consisted of various ways of putting an end to these rebirths. These solutions were, at any rate initially, individual solutions: they were meant to rescue individuals from continued rebirths.

As I stated earlier, we do not know how this individualization came about. We have no sources from Greater Magadha that precede Buddhism and Jainism. However, we know a great deal more about the *de-individualization* that occurred when the doctrine of karma fell in Brahmanical hands.

We have already seen that the option to become a wandering mendicant, striving for release from rebirth and karmic retribution, came to be incorporated into Brahmanism as one of the options open to a Brahmin. The early texts repeatedly assert that this is not the preferred option, which is rather to become a householder. The authors of these early texts reluctantly included the option of becoming a wandering mendicant, presumably

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\(^{679}\) An English version came out in 1982.

\(^{680}\) I may not be the only one. Maurice Bloch (2012: 120), for example, states that 'when ... we try to relate Geertz's discussion of the Balinese 'person' (1973), with Dumont's 'individual' (1983), Mauss's 'moi' (1938) and Rosaldo's 'self' (1984) ... I have to admit that I am completely lost'.
because it had gained popularity among certain Brahmins. We have also seen that the mendicant option was later delegated to the last position in a sequence of life-stages, thus reserving it for old or even very old men, effectively discouraging young Brahmins from spending their lives in the pursuit of liberation from rebirth and karmic retribution.

Brahmanism clearly felt threatened by the individual responsibility and initiative that accompanied the doctrine of karmic retribution. The search for individual release did not fit easily into the Brahmanical worldview, for here every person is expected to stick to their social role, whether they like it or not.

A particularly interesting attempt to immunize the threat this posed to Brahmanical society finds expression in the Bhagavadgītā, a text that was to become extremely popular in Hinduism, and has remained so until today. In order to understand its message (or at least the part or aspect of its message that is relevant in the present context), we must consider some of the thoughts that accompanied the belief in karmic retribution.

According to this belief, deeds carried out in this life will have an effect in future lives. This process can only be interrupted by the complete cessation of all activity. This explains the central role that suppression of activity and immobility play in the asceticism practised by those who wished to escape from the round of rebirths. However, there was another solution. Many accepted that the core of one's being, one's self, is essentially inactive. Realizing this was as good as abstaining from all activity, because it entailed the liberating insight that in reality one does not act, so that there can no longer be question of karmic retribution.

This belief about the real nature of the self changes the picture altogether. We saw that karmic retribution links all our activity, all that we do, to effects in a future life. But all that we do is, or should be, all that our inner self does. Our inner self, however, does not act at all, it is totally inactive. There can, therefore, be no karmic retribution for what our inner self does. If only we realize this, we will be freed from the cycle of rebirths and karmic retribution.

It is easy to see that this second path is a path of knowledge, of an inner realization of the true nature of one’s self. This realization may accompany ascetic practices, and it often does. There are indications in the early Jaina texts that such a belief about the nature of the self had adherents among the early Jainas, but this belief did not survive for long in Jainism, and was soon replaced by an altogether different conception of the self.681 However, this belief about the inactive nature of the inner self had great attraction for the followers of Brahmanism.

Recall that the doctrine of rebirth and karmic retribution is unknown to the bulk of Vedic literature. Brahmanism became acquainted with it at a late date, and different groups of Brahmins reacted differently to it. Some, and among them the most orthodox, did not want to hear of it. Śabara — the Mīmāṃsaka who wrote the very important Mīmāṃsābhāṣya that is also known as Śabara Bhāṣya — still has no place for rebirth and karmic retribution around the middle of the first millennium CE. The Čārvākas, sometimes called materialists by modern scholars, still rejected this doctrine toward the end of the first millennium CE.682 But other groups of Brahmins accepted it already quite early. And in doing so they were confronted with the same questions that had occupied thinkers in Greater Magadha. They were inevitably drawn to the two responses of

681 See Greater Magadha pp. 33-34, with references.
682 On the Čārvākas as a Brahmanical school of thought, see Greater Magadha pp. 150-159.
inactivity asceticism and the realization of the inactive nature of the inner self. Both these responses found followers among Brahmns, but the second one, about the inactive inner self, became particularly popular.

This second response found expression in different Brahmanical schools of philosophy. The philosophical school called Sāmkhya is of special importance for us at present. The origin of this school may lie in Greater Magadha, but Sāmkhya came to be incorporated into Brahmanism, so that it came to be thought of as a Brahmanical school of philosophy. The Sāmkhya philosophy postulates a fundamental division into two of all that exists. On one hand there is the self (depending on the school one considers, there can be one single self for all, the Supreme Self, or one separate self for each person; the term often used is puruṣa), on the other there is everything else. This everything else usually goes by the name of prakṛti, sometimes translated ‘primal matter’, and Sāmkhya has a great deal to say about it, among others that it has three constituents (guna). It has much less to say about the puruṣa, the self, for the simple reason that the self does nothing. The way in which puruṣa and prakṛti interact is of course a matter of great concern to the Sāmkhya philosophy, but it is necessary to enter into details now. For our present purposes it suffices to see that the fundamental scheme of Sāmkhya is directly related to the question of karmic retribution and liberation. Someone who masters the Sāmkhya philosophy knows that his deeper self is inactive and not involved in the events of this world, including the activities of his (or her) own body and mind. This philosophy can be looked upon as the intellectual counterpart of inactivity asceticism, and it is not surprising that the two often go hand in hand. Texts like the Mahābhārata use the term Yoga to refer to inactivity asceticism, and point out that Sāmkhya and Yoga go together, or even that the two are, at bottom, the same. Long after the Mahābhārata, a much-developed form of Yoga finds expression in the Yogaśāstra (i.e., Yogasūtra and Yogabhāṣya), but even there the link with Sāmkhya is still strong. One is tempted to think that Sāmkhya is primarily a philosophy of ascetics, or at any rate a philosophy that by its nature is connected with asceticism.

In spite of their regular co-occurrence, there is an important difference between the first and the second response, i.e. between the path of inactivity asceticism and the path of insight into the fundamentally inactive nature of the inner self. The ascetic, if he reaches liberation at all, does so at the moment of death. Before his death, while still alive, he may be close to liberation, but he has not yet reached it, he is not liberated.

Insight into the true nature of the self is a different matter. To reach this insight, one has to be alive. And if this insight is sufficient for being freed from karmic retribution, this means that one could become liberated while still being alive, i.e. there might be people around who are freed from rebirth and karmic retribution. In more recent centuries, a person who is liberated while alive would come to be known as jīvanmukta ‘liberated while alive’. However, texts from the earlier period, including texts that are more or less contemporary with the Bhagavadgītā, do not know this term, and are ambiguous and vague about the notion.

This vagueness has consequences. If one accepts that there are living people who are freed from rebirth and karmic retribution, one is confronted with the question how such people, once liberated, act in the world. More recent texts — most specifically perhaps the Yogavāśīṣṭha and the Jīvanmuktiviveka — discuss this issue at length (Fort

684 See Appendix V, below.
1998: 11 ff.). Texts from the time of the Bhagavadgītā, including the Bhagavadgītā itself, do not, and indeed, they do not clearly distinguish between a liberated person and a person who wishes to be liberated. But this leaves place for one of the Bhagavadgītā’s special messages.

Let us be clear about it that the Bhagavadgītā has plenty to say about the ascetic life, about the person who withdraws from society. But its most important message, which is also the reason why it could become part of the Mahābhārata, is that one can pursue the highest goal while yet staying in society. Arjuna, in spite of his wishes, is not asked to leave society. He can pursue the highest goal while yet fulfilling his obligations as a warrior.

Arjuna is not liberated. The text talks about his liberation as something that may happen in the future. Even so, Arjuna is encouraged to know his inner self, the self that does not act. The self is identified with the Supreme Self, but that, too, does not act. Rebirth and karmic retribution are the result of attachment to the activities of the Prakṛti. He, who knows that his inner self is different from everything else, from Prakṛti, will not be reborn. But what then happens to his body and mind? It is here that the Bhagavadgītā introduces a new notion: Body and mind, which are different from

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685 Bhag 9.28: āṃśubhāṣubhaphalaiv evam mokṣyase karmabandhanaih/ sannyāsayogayuktātmā vimukta māṃ upaśyavi// “Thus you will be freed from the prison of deeds and their results, good and evil. Wholly trained in renunciation, released, you will come to me.” (tr. Bolle)
686 Bhag 2.19-21: ya evam vetti hantāram yaś caināṁ manyate hatam/ ubhau tava nāvijānīto nāyām hanti na hanyate/ na jāyate mriyate vā kādācin nāyām bhūtvā haviyā vā na bhāyāh/ ajo nityāḥ sāśvato ’yam purāṇo na hanyate hanyamāne śārīre// vedāviniśānaṁ nityaṁ ya evam ajām avyayam/ katham sa puruṣaḥ pārtha kam ghatayati hanti kam// “Who thinks this one a slayer, or who thinks of him as slain, both lack understanding. He neither slays nor is slain. He is never born. He never dies. He has not come to be, nor will he come to be. Primeval, he is unborn, changeless, everlasting. The body will be slain, but he will not. How can the man who knows him as imperishable, eternal, unborn, and changeless, kill anyone? Whom does he cause to be killed, Son of Prthā?” (tr. Bolle, modified). For the translation of verse 20b (“He has not come to be, nor will he come to be”), see Brønhorst 1991b: 303.
Bhag 2.24cd: nityaḥ sarvagataḥ sthānur acalo ’yam sanātanan “Subsisting always, everywhere, immobile, fixed is the eternal one.” (tr. Bolle)
Bhag 2.30ab: dehi nityaṁ avadhyo ’yam dehe sarvasya bhārata “That person existing in everyone’s body is for ever inviolable” (tr. Bolle)
687 Bhag 13.31: anādītvān nirguṇatvāḥ paramātmāyaṁ avayayah/ śārīrastho ’pi kaunteya na karotī na lipyate// “The changeless, supreme self, though dwelling in the body, does not act and is not affected by action, for it has no beginning and is not subject to the states of matter.” (tr. Bolle)
688 Bhag 13.21: puruṣaḥ prakṛtitāḥ hi bhūnte prakṛtijān gunān/ kāraṇāṁ gunasangas ’sya sadasadyojanmasu// “For when the spirit exists in primal matter it enjoys the states matter brings about. Its attachment to those states effects good and evil births.” (tr. Bolle)
689 Bhag 13.23: ya evam vetti puruṣaṁ prakṛtin ca guṇaṁ saha/ sarvathā varmaṁ ’pi na sa bhāyō ’bhāyaye// “Who thus knows the spirit and primal matter with its states is not born again, no matter what he does in life”; Bhag 13.29: prakṛtyaiva ca karmāni kriyamāṇāni sarvasah/ yaḥ pasyati tathātmānam akaritāram sa paśyati// “Primal matter alone is at work in all that is done. Who sees this and sees that he himself is not engaged in acts has true insight”. The end of rebirth is also mentioned in Bhag 8.15-16: mām upetya punarjanma duḥkhālayam asāśvatam/ nāpnuvanti maḥātmanāḥ saṃsiddhiṁ paramām gatāḥ/ ābhrmahābhuvanāl lokāh punar āvartino ’rjuna/ mām upetya tu kaunteya punarjanma na vidyate// “Great men reach me and do not take a new birth fleeing and miserable. They have attained their perfect fulfillment. On this side of God’s abode worlds are cycles, Arjuna, but for those who reach me there is no repetition.” (tr. Bolle)
self and belong to the Prakṛti and its constituent Guṇas, will continue to act on their own. And how do body and mind act on their own? The answer that the Bhagavadgītā gives is: in accordance with one’s position in society. Indeed, the duties of Brahmans, Kṣatriyas, Vaiśyas and Śūdras are determined by the Guṇas that arise out of the respective natures of each of these. In Arjuna’s case, this means: he will behave like a Kṣatriya, a warrior, and fight the war that he, as a warrior, is expected to fight.

It will be useful to contrast this with the more typical example of the belief in rebirth and karmic retribution had on people. This belief convinced many people that they had to leave society and dedicate themselves to their individual liberation, preferably through ascetic practices. This had given rise, and continued to give rise, to many ascetic movements, and contributed to the fact that many foreign visitors, from Megasthenes, around 300 BCE, to modern times, were struck by the numerous ascetics they could observe in India. The message that the Bhagavadgītā delivers to Arjuna is the complete opposite of all this: Rather than leaving society, the person who looks for liberation should stay right in it and concentrate on his or her duties in society. The Bhagavadgītā arrives at this message on the basis of the same theoretical assumptions that induced others to leave society.

This reinterpretation of earlier material by the Bhagavadgītā is a striking tour de force. Far from preaching an escape from society, the Bhagavadgītā preaches the social ideal of a completely static society, in which no one aspires to another position than the one into which he or she is born. No need to add that this implies respect for the superior status of Brahmans. The popularity of the Bhagavadgītā is obviously the best guarantee of Brahmanical privilege that one could dream of, and a total obstruction to every form of innovation, whether social or otherwise. Surprisingly, Dumont understands the Bhagavadgītā differently, so much so that he thinks that the devotion to God it preaches allows all, even non-renouncers, to become individuals. I will not enter into a detailed discussion of this strange position, and rather repeat my observation that the Bhagavadgītā embodies one attempt among others, though perhaps the most sophisticated one, to assure de-individualization, total acceptance of one’s place in the world with all that entails.

We have so far considered ways in which Brahmanism absorbed the new doctrine of rebirth and karmic retribution, but in such a manner that its dangerous aspects were securely kept under control. By trying to relegate the active search for freedom from

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600 Bhag 3.27: prakṛteḥ kriyamāṇāni guṇaiḥ karmāni sarvaśah/ ahaṅkāravimūḍhātmā kartāham iti manyate// “Always and everywhere, acts are done by the states arising in primal matter. A man totally confused in his self-consciousness imagines: I act.” (tr. Bolle)

601 Bhag 18.41: brāhmaṇaḥ kṣatriyaviśaṁ śūdrāṁ ca paraṁtaṁ/ karmāṇi pravibhaktāṁ svabhāvaprabhavair guṇaiḥ// “Spiritual guides, warriors, producers of wealth, and the servant class, O Conqueror, have tasks and rites which differ according to the state natural to each class” (tr. Bolle). Bhag 18.42-44 details what those duties are.

602 Kṛṣṇa’s situation is similar, in that he, based on his Prakṛti, creates the world without being attached to it: Bhag 9.8.9: prakṛteḥ svāṁ avasaṭabhya visṛṣṭīṁ punah punah/ bhūtagreeṁ imam krtṣnam avaśāṁ prakṛter vaśāṁ/ na ca mām tāṁ karmāṁ nibadhantisti dhanaṁjaya/ udāśīnavad āśīnaṁ asaktuṁ teṣu karmasū// “Depending on my own nature, time after time I send them forth, this host of beings, without their will, by dint of that nature. This activity does not imprison me, O Fighter for Wealth! I appear as an onlooker, detached in the midst of this work.” (tr. Bolle, modified)
rebirth to the very end of a person's life, the life of the renouncer could be strictly regulated and institutionalized. By proclaiming that the best form of renunciation is renouncing the fruits of one's deeds, with the result that the best way to search for freedom from rebirth is through dutifully adhering to one's role in society, the conflict between Brahmanical order and search for freedom was killed in the bud. Since the doctrine of rebirth and karmic retribution might give rise to individuals, i.e. people who actually took responsibility for themselves rather than accepting Brahmanical guidance in all fields, Brahmanism could not but adjust this doctrine to its own needs and requirements.

Why did Brahmanism accept this doctrine at all? Interestingly, it appears that there was a lot of resistance against it, and that this resistance continued for more than a thousand years. The most radical rejection found expression in a school of Brahmanical thought commonly referred to in modern literature as materialism, but whose central position was the rejection of rebirth. This school — whose adherents are called Lokāyatas or Cārvākas — flourished for a while and produced a number of texts. These texts are now lost, because this Brahmanical school lost out in the long run against the belief in rebirth and karmic retribution, whose success on the Indian subcontinent became total. But this took time. We know that representatives of the Cārvāka school of thought still existed toward the end of the first millennium CE. After that date they disappeared, and their texts were no longer copied. Criticism of the Cārvākas went on for quite a while, even after the year 1000 CE, but they now were mere strawmen to whom one could attribute all imaginary forms of wickedness because there were no real Carvakas around any longer to defend themselves.693

It is important to realize that until the middle of the first millennium the Cārvākas were close to the perhaps most conservative and orthodox thinkers in the Vedic tradition. Mimāṃsā is a school of Brahmanical thought whose prime concern is the interpretation of the ancient Veda. This school still had no place for rebirth and karmic retribution in its most important surviving classical text, composed in the fifth century CE. Only after that did it open up to the new doctrine.

Also threatening to Brahmins was the idea that their preeminent position might be thought of as the result of good deeds performed in earlier lives. This, if true, would deprive them of the conviction that their superiority was inherent, and would therefore accompany them forever, even in future births if such a thing existed. We do indeed find that certain Brahmanical texts accept rebirth and karmic retribution while yet maintaining that Brahmins are a special case, that God himself gave them their preeminence at the moment of creation. Their special status therefore belongs to them, and has nothing to do with deeds they may have performed in earlier lives.694

What all these examples illustrate is that Brahmanism was a strong force toward de-individualization in early India, and that the doctrine of rebirth of karmic retribution needed special treatment before it could be absorbed into Brahmanism.

Personal responsibility plays an important role in the discussion above. The doctrine of rebirth and karmic retribution makes the individual responsible for his fate. Brahmanism, in spite of resistance, ended up accepting the doctrine, but made efforts to take the sting out of it by reducing the individualistic element to the extent possible. In this way

693 See Greater Magadha p. 150 ff.; Bronkhorst 2008a.
694 See Appendix III.
Brahmanism did the exact opposite of what Christianity did in the West, judging by Larry Siedentop’s recent *Inventing the Individual* (2014). Christianity taught that the fate of each person at the final judgment depended only on that person, not on the group to which she belonged or on her hereditary status in society. Here, as in the case of rebirth and karmic retribution, personal responsibility was central. The Christian emphasis on the responsibility of the individual contrasted with the family and clan-centered emphasis of Greek and Roman antiquity, but in the long run the Christian perspective gained the upper hand. In India the opposite happened. Here the long-term winner was Brahmanism, which to a large extent succeeded in suppressing the individual element that characterized the belief in rebirth and karmic retribution. It is true that the development from equality before God to a society with at least a semblance of equality took a very long time in Europe. The conviction that one's future births are determined by one's own actions and nothing else was no immediate guarantee for an egalitarian society. But a development in that direction, if ever there was one, appears to have been nipped in the bud by the rise of Brahmanism.

### III.2. Rationality

The notion of rationality used here — which will be explained in detail below — is inseparable from critical debate. A tradition of rational inquiry is one whose members feel inclined, or obliged, to listen and respond (verbally) to criticism of their ideas. The little we have learned about Brahmanism so far should make it obvious that Brahmanism did not provide fertile ground for the development of such a tradition. Brahmimical knowledge is sacred knowledge, not something that should or could be subjected to criticism. In spite of this, critical debate did become part of Brahmanism, at least in its philosophical schools. These schools illustrate the consequences of a tradition of rational inquiry: being subjected to unfriendly criticism forced their adherents to develop coherent systems of thought. But this tradition of rational inquiry, not surprisingly, had a hard time imposing itself. Indeed, it seems to be a general truth that traditions of rational inquiry have a hard time imposing themselves wherever they occur. There are, as a matter of fact, only very few cultures in which traditions of rational enquiry have found a place. India, and with it Brahmimical culture, is one of these. Our first task is to investigate how this happened.

#### III.2.1. How rationality came to India

India has had a long tradition of rational debate linked to systematic attempts to make sense of the world and our place in it. For a long time different systems of philosophy existed side by side, and during much of this time their adherents made major efforts to show that only their own system was right and all the others were wrong or incoherent. The result of this ongoing debate was that many thinkers tried to improve their own systems and in the process refined and developed them. At the same time the art of debate and of proof received ample attention, and logic underwent a long development which scholars are still engaged in unraveling.

Examples of criticism and disagreement may be found in a variety of human cultures, but instances of resulting changes in the systems that are subjected to criticism
may be less common. Indeed, Randall Collins (1998: 163 f.) observes that there is abundant evidence that conflict is sometimes creative. Some kinds of structural rivalry drive innovation by opposition. However, others have the opposite effect on intellectual life, producing stagnation and particularism. Creative changes driven by rivalry constitute the dynamic of the history of classical Indian philosophy, as we will see below. One factor, viz. the presence in India of a tradition of rational inquiry (see below), not envisaged by Collins, may help explain why.

The features mentioned above (debate, criticism), along with a further condition to be specified below, will here be called a tradition of rational inquiry.\footnote{Some such use of the term ‘rational’ is not new, and is close to its use by William Warren Bartley III and Peter Munz; cp. Munz 1985: 50: "We say, if we are Panrationalists, that it is rational to criticise everything and to hold on to only those statements which have so far withstood criticism. In this view, ‘reason’ does not denote a substantive faculty or a correct method of arriving at statements which are true; but a negative quality. When one is rational, one is open to criticism and an absolutely limitless invitation to criticism is the essence of rationality." Cp. further the statement ‘there is no better synonym for ‘rational’ than ‘critical’’ attributed to K. Popper by Piatek (1995: 171) (cp. Popper 1998: 109; Artigas 1999); also Miller 1994; Munz 1993: 177. — Note that already Plato described reasoning ‘as the silent debate of the soul with itself’ (Sorabji 1993: 10, with references to Theaetetus 189E-190A, Sophist 263E-264A, Philebus 38C-E; but see also Sorabji 1993: 65-67), i.e. as what we might call an interiorized debate. Sorabji further draws attention (1993: 36-37, further 67-71; with reference to De Anima 3.3) to Aristotle’s claim ‘that belief involves being persuaded, which in turn implies possessing reason (logos)’. This does not necessarily involve dialogue with others, and Sorabji assumes that ‘Aristotle would allow his persuasion to be self-persuasion’. — The use of the term ‘rational’ here advocated does away with the problem of having to distinguish between different forms of ‘reason’ or ‘rationality’ as maintained, e.g., by Pierre Vidal-Naquet (Vernant & Vidal-Naquet 1990: Présentation).}

India has such a tradition of rational inquiry, but the same is not true of all human cultures. The presence of a tradition of rational inquiry in India expresses itself, as indicated earlier, in its tradition of rational debate and its results: the attempts made by thinkers to improve their own system, and the refinements and developments that this entailed. We might say that systems of thought were subjected to sceptical inquiry, and recall what Richard H. Popkin, an expert on the sceptical tradition in the West, says about scepticism (1996: xviii): "For years I have been toying with the idea of writing an article describing scepticism as being like an anonymous letter. The question of who is the author may be of some interest, but it is not the main concern. The recipient has the letter. The letter raises a host of problems for the recipient in defending his or her dogmatic philosophical position. Whether the anonymous author can be found or identified, dead or alive, sane or insane, does not help in dealing with or dismissing the problems. So whether scepticism can be consistently stated is not the main point. The thrust of the sceptical attack is in the effect it has on the dogmatist, who cannot evade the thrust by denouncing the sceptical opponent whom he or she may not be able to find, identify or classify. It is the dogmatists who have to do the defending, if they can, regardless of whether the sceptic really exists as a flesh and blood member of the human race, or as a raving inmate of a mental institute, or a science fiction character. ... The sceptic, real or imaginary, has led the non-sceptics to struggle over and over again to find a coherent and consistent way of putting their intellectual house in acceptable order (acceptable to honest dogmatists), only to find that another sceptic, real or imaginary, is creating another mass of doubts that require
further examination and rethinking. The sceptic, the anonymous letter writer, does not have to be part of that process, but only has to await the results, and be ready to prepare another anonymous letter."

One further condition must be specified: as in the case of Popkin’s anonymous letter writer, in a tradition of rational inquiry there are no areas of reality which are fundamentally beyond the realm of critical examination, no areas which should exclusively be left to tradition, revelation, or insight. This condition in particular distinguishes a ‘tradition of rational inquiry’ from ‘rationality’ as understood by various authors (see, e.g., Staal 1989; Goody 1996: ch. 1).\footnote{A contemporary debate where the parties involved do not seem willing to allow that there are no areas of reality which are fundamentally beyond the realm of critical examination is the religious dialogue between Moslems and Christians. Cp. Waardenburg 1998: 48: "Le débat entre les deux religions tient ainsi d’une sorte de compétition pour la ‘possession’ de la Révélation", et p. 109: "Aussi triviale que la remarque puisse paraître, la différence essentielle entre un monologue et un dialogue réside tout de même dans le fait que dans le second cas on écoute et répond à ce qu’a dit l’autre. ... Dans ce sens, le dialogue interreligieux et notamment celui entre musulmans et chrétiens commence à peine."} It implies that rational inquiry can be used even in realms that might encroach upon other sources of authority, such as tradition and religion, and even ordinary perception. It is perhaps no coincidence that both in ancient Greece and in ancient India, soon after traditions of rational inquiry had established themselves, thinkers appeared who put unlimited confidence in the power of reasoning. Both the Eleatics in Greece and Nāgārjuna and his followers in India did not hesitate to reject perceived reality on the basis — not of tradition, revelation, or special insight — but of mere argument.\footnote{This is an enduring feature of the two traditions. For Greece, cp. Lloyd 1991: 102: "The readiness of Greek philosophers early middle and late to countenance radical and radically counter-intuitive solutions — driven by arguments — is indeed a recurrent phenomenon distinctive of what the Greeks themselves understood by rationality." For India, see the examples discussed in Bronkhorst 2011b.} Let it be clear that having a tradition of rational inquiry does not imply that every thinker is rational, i.e. critical and open in all respects and in all the areas about which they express themselves. Moreover, having a tradition of rational inquiry is not the same as being able to think intelligently. People may think intelligently about a variety of things, without trespassing into areas that belong to tradition, revelation, insight or religion.\footnote{Note that a tradition of rational inquiry, a social fact, is here taken to exert a decisive influence on individual thought, a psychological fact. Cp. Horton 1993: 330: "[T]he Old Adam ... is anything but spontaneously self-critical. So far as possible, he hangs on to his established framework come what may. If he starts to criticize it himself, this is usually only by way of anticipating the critical assaults of other thinkers committed to rival frameworks. In [a] consensual setting, such others are by definition absent."}

There are reasons to believe that, apart from ancient Greece and India and their inheritors, there are no other early cultures that were in the possession of a tradition of rational inquiry. This claim runs the risk of being opposed by those who maintain that there are three philosophical traditions in human history: those connected with Europe, India, and China respectively.\footnote{See, e.g., Scharfstein 1997; 1998: chapter 1. For references to earlier literature, see Halbfass 1997: 302. References to literature in which more than just three philosophical traditions are recognised in Halbfass 1997: 301; Scharfstein 1998: footnote on p. 4-5, with p. 532 note 6.} It appears that China has never had a rational tradition in
the sense here proposed.\textsuperscript{700} I will argue this point, following the lead of the Sinologist A. C. Graham, who has given a great deal of thought to the question of rationality in China.\textsuperscript{701}

Interestingly, Graham does think that China knew rationality at some point in its history.\textsuperscript{702} He dedicates a chapter of his book \textit{Disputers of the Tao} (1989) to it. Here we read: "In China rationality develops with the controversies of the schools, and dwindles as they fade after 200 B.C." (p. 75). He draws attention to the so-called ‘sophists’ in China, and compares these with the Greek Eleatics: "Nothing could be more disorientating, more disruptive, than reason first awakening to and revelling in its powers. One may well wonder how philosophy ever gets past this stage, with the most ancient paradoxes forever returning to plague it. The first discovery of uninhibited reason is that it leads inevitably to absurd conclusions. So why go farther? The Greeks did get past this initial disorientation, the Chinese never did." (p. 75-76). It is open to question whether the Eleatics' way of questioning should be described as ‘disorientation’, even though the term may very well apply in the Chinese situation. The Eleatics used their reason not only to undermine the universally accepted conception of the real world, but to determine what reality is like: unborn, imperishable, whole, unique, immovable, etc.\textsuperscript{703} The Indian philosopher Nāgārjuna, too, used reason to tell us what reality is like: he arrived at the conclusion that no thing exists, as Claus Oetke's analyses have shown.\textsuperscript{704} The Chinese thinkers mentioned by Graham, on the other hand, do not seem to have used

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  \item It is important to take note of the fact that the absence of “a rational tradition in the sense here proposed” is not the same as the absence of rationalism tout court or the absence of a science of logic (Reding 2004: 15, 31).
  \item Cp. further Jullien 1995; Goody 1996: 26 f. Kohn's (1995) discussion of the debates between Buddhists and Taoists is interesting in this connection. Note that Graham was very much concerned with the subject of our query, as is evident, for example, from the questions he formulated in the Preface to his \textit{Later Mohist Logic, Ethics and Science} (1978: xi): "Is the Greek ideal of rationality a discovery made once only in history, or does it have parallels in India and China? Are there episodes in Oriental, as in Greek and Mediaeval science, which anticipate in part the Scientific Revolution in the 17th century?"
  \item Graham's reflections induced J. J. Clarke (1997: 200) to react that "it is plausible to argue that Eastern ways of thinking have a rationality that may differ in certain respects from those characteristic of the West, but which is not less ‘rational’ for that". Personally I would be more inclined to agree with Chad Hansen who — in a chapter on ‘methodological reflections’ which agrees in various ways with positions taken by me in connection with the interpretation of an Indian text (Bronkhorst 1986: xiii f.) — observed (1983: 19): "... that Chinese philosophy is logical in something like a dispositional sense is not a discovery but [our] decision. It is a decision to propose, criticize, and defend interpretations in a particular way, using consistency and coherence as critical standards." This methodological position does not, of course, tell us anything about the extent to which Chinese thinkers themselves were willing to apply such standards in areas belonging to tradition, revelation, insight or religion.
  \item Cp. Guthrie 1965: 26 f., 87 f.
  \item E.g. Oetke 1988a. It is regrettable that Guthrie (1965: 53 n. 1), instead of comparing Parmenides with Nāgārjuna, compares him with "the cosmic illusion of Maya in Indian thought". No wonder that he arrives at the conclusion that "India and Parmenides are poles apart" and that "in truth the motives and methods of the Indian schools, and the theological and mystical background of their thought, are so utterly different from those of the Greeks that there is little profit in the comparison". Guthrie, and no doubt many others with him, had fallen prey to the tendency to see mysticism in everything Indian.
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their reasoning for much beyond ‘hair-splitting and paradoxical talk’, as they were accused of doing. Indeed, one of their most famous paradoxes concerned the ‘white horse’: the claim was made that a white horse is not a horse. It appears that reason in India and Greece could be used to challenge tradition and other sources of authority, whereas in China much less importance was attached to this new tool. Logically it may be possible to compare the situations in the three traditions. From the point of view of the importance given to rational argument, even in the hands of the so-called ‘sophists’, reasoning in China does not seem to have emancipated itself from the level of simple spielerei.

Graham sums up the situation in his article "Rationalism and anti-rationalism in pre-Buddhist China" (1989a). He observes here (p. 142/98-99): "About 300 B.C. the Later Mohists undertake the enterprise of grounding the whole Mohist ethic in the analysis of moral concepts. This surely is rationalism as we find it in Greece, the plainest example in the Chinese tradition. But the Sophists have already provoked the reaction of the Taoist Chuang-tzu (c. 320 B.C.), who will have a much more lasting influence in Chinese thought. ... Chuang-tzu's position is ‘anti-rationalism’ (denial that reason is the right means to see things as they are) rather than ‘irrationalism’ (which allows you to see things as you like). After 200 B.C. Chinese thinking channels in the orthodox Confucian direction (ethical, practical, conventional) and the unorthodox Taoist (spontaneous, mystical, disreputable). The former is often ‘rational’, in that it checks its synthesizing by analysis, but not ‘rationalistic’ in the sense of Later Mohist or Greek thought, which tries to detach rational demonstration wholly from common-sense synthesizing; the latter remains anti-rationalist as philosophical Taoism, and its continuation as Ch'an or Zen in Chinese Buddhism." It seems clear that a tradition of rational inquiry in which the power of reasoning was considered, not just useful or amusing, but a vital instrument for establishing the truth at all levels, even those normally claimed by other sources of authority, has never seen the light of day in China.705 It is in this context interesting to observe that Indian Buddhist logic, when introduced into China in the seventh century of our era, did not survive for long. Its fate was to be mainly handed down as a secret science in Buddhist circles, and largely ignored by everyone else.706 As Harbsmeier (1998: 361) points out, "Buddhist logic in India had its social roots in the wide-spread practice of public philosophical debate, whereas this social practice never quite took root in China". Harbsmeier further reports that he carried out a comparative study of the Sanskrit and Chinese versions of the Nyāyapraveśa (with the help of several Sanskritists) which led him to the following remarkable conclusion (p. 402): "Hsüan-Tsang's Chinese translation is not only often an improvement on the Sanskrit original, it has turned out — to my great surprise — to be generally easier to read as well." This suggests that there is no reason whatsoever to attribute the relatively minor role of logic in China to the Chinese language. Harbsmeier adds the following reflections about Chinese Buddhist logic (yin ming) (p. 414): "One may speculate why this remarkable logical flourish in

705 According to Harbsmeier’s (1998: 268), in ancient China "[r]easoning tended to consist in an appeal to historical example and traditional authority", the very opposite of what we mean by rational inquiry. The absence of systematic criticism had consequences which Landes describes in the following terms (1998: 344): "This want of exchange and challenge, this subjectivity, explains the uncertainty of gains and the easy loss of impetus. Chinese savants had no way of knowing when they were right. It is subsequent research, mostly Western, that has discovered and awarded palms of achievement to the more inspired."

China remained as marginal as it did to the Chinese intellectual tradition as a whole. Obvious perennial questions re-emerge from these summary considerations: Why did Buddhist logic not catch on even among Chinese Buddhists, not to speak of Chinese thinkers within other traditions? Why, for that matter, do we not find a sustained presence of a significant intellectual subculture cultivating the traditions of yin ming and of Mohist logic for that matter? Why did no one want to read the yin ming literature? Why did those who did read it in later times tend to misunderstand it? Why did the practice of yin ming decline whereas Aristotelian logic was revived and developed into a central discipline within the European educational curriculum? These are questions that belong properly to the anthropology of logic. They concern the societal and cultural conditions that may or may not favour the cultural and sociological success of the intellectual practice of the science of logic." Is it possible that a tradition of rational inquiry is to be counted among the societal and cultural conditions that may favour this cultural and sociological success of logic?

The comparison with China is interesting and useful in many ways. It shows that the absence of a tradition of rational inquiry has nothing whatsoever to do with stupidity or backwardness. China, as we learn from Joseph Needham's Science and Civilisation in China, made a large number of important discoveries in the field of technology in the course of its history, and was perhaps technologically the most advanced country on earth at the dawn of the scientific revolution in Europe. In other words: not having a tradition of rational inquiry is not the same as not being able to think intelligently.

It seems possible, then, that there are two, and only two, independent traditions of rational debate and inquiry (in the sense indicated above) in the history of mankind. These two are, in their oldest accessible forms, linked to Greece and India respectively.

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707 Recall in this connection the impressive maritime expeditions that took the Chinese to many Asian countries and even to Africa eighty years before Vasco da Gama; see Levathes 1994; Landes 1998: 93-98. David S. Landes on the other hand, in his book The Wealth and Poverty of Nations (1998: 45 ff.), draws attention to the fact that many Chinese inventions were confined to the imperial court and had little impact on society at large. He further speaks about the "mystery [of] China's failure to realize its potential" (p. 55 f., with some explanations that have been put forward) and wonders why there was "subsequent retreat and loss" after "exceptional creativity and precocity" (p. 339). Lloyd makes the following observation with regard to classical Chinese philosophy (1990: 125-26): "clearly insofar as the ideas a philosopher produced were directed at a ruler whom he was hoping to influence, and insofar as the ruler himself was the final arbiter of the value of those ideas, those factors may well have imposed certain constraints on the ideas considered worth putting forward, constraints that may be thought to have inhibited, if not excluded, the development both of radical solutions to problems and of theoretical, abstract, impractical ones". For a comparative analysis of early Chinese and Greek thought in relation to their different social and political backgrounds, see Collins 1998: 146 f. Regarding classical Chinese philosophy, Lloyd (1990: 125-26) makes the following observation: "clearly insofar as the ideas a philosopher produced were directed at a ruler whom he was hoping to influence, and insofar as the ruler himself was the final arbiter of the value of those ideas, those factors may well have imposed certain constraints on the ideas considered worth putting forward, constraints that may be thought to have inhibited, if not excluded, the development both of radical solutions to problems and of theoretical, abstract, impractical ones". For a comparative analysis of early Chinese and Greek thought in relation to their different social and political backgrounds, see Collins 1998: 146 f.

708 It is open to question whether the Indian sciences took part in and profited from this tradition of rational debate and inquiry. Cp. Randall Collins 1998: 551: "Organizationally, the
Such a tradition, once properly established, may attain an impetus of its own that ensures its continuation, even in less than ideal circumstances. Greek thinking subsequently influenced the Hellenistic world and its inheritors, primarily Western Europe and the world of Islam, and its tradition of rational inquiry came along, usually in a watered down form. Indian thought, especially in its Buddhist forms, spread eastward, and its tradition of rational inquiry, though not able to acquire a lasting foothold in China, left its traces in the Tibetan tradition of debate. The possibility that there are two and only two independent traditions of rational inquiry, one of these coming from India, should lend to the study of Indian philosophy an interest that extends far beyond regional concerns. If this kind of philosophy is so exceptional, something that does not automatically come about wherever human beings have enough leisure to think of more than their daily concerns, how and why did it arise in India, and not in any other civilizations except ancient Greece?

The question as to how and why rational philosophy arose in India has a parallel: how and why did rational philosophy arise in Greece? Unlike the previous one, this question has received a fair amount of attention in scholarly literature. It seems clear that the sudden rise of scientific knowledge and philosophy in ancient Greece had much to do with the prevailing custom of critical discussion, and of convincing others of one’s own point of view, which was linked to the particular political situation prevalent in ancient Greece. Geoffrey Lloyd, in his book Magic, Reason and Experience (1979), draws attention to the parallelism that exists between two important features. One is the fact that in Greece, from the sixth century BCE onward, questions how society should be regulated and concerning the merits and demerits of different kinds of constitutions came to be a subject for open — and not merely theoretical — discussion. The other is the prominent characteristic of Greek speculative thought to be able to challenge deeply held assumptions about ‘nature’ and to debate such issues as the origin of the world. He then observes (p. 249): "In some respects we appear to be dealing not just with two analogous developments, but with two aspects of the same development." Having supported and illustrated this observation in various ways, he states (p. 255): "Where the topic of how the state should be governed could be debated openly by the citizen body as a whole, there were, we may presume, fewer inhibitions — at least in some quarters — to challenging deep-seated assumptions and beliefs about ‘natural phenomena’, the gods or the origin or order of things." The features most characteristic of what I have proposed to call a tradition of rational inquiry: primarily free and uninhibited discussion of all issues even in areas which might encroach upon other sources of authority, appear to be intimately linked to the political situation of Greece at that time. Inhibitions, i.e., the fear

Mathematicians, astronomers, and medical doctors were based in private familistic lineages and guilds, never part of the sustained argument provided by philosophical networks. Public networks of argument did exist in India; its philosophical lineages reached high levels of abstract development. Only mathematics and science were not carried along with it." This question will be further discussed in § III.2.2, below.

709 On the passage of Greek thought into Arabic culture, see Gutas 1998. The Arab conquests, as Gutas points out (p. 13), united areas and peoples that for a millennium had been subjects to Hellenization ever since Alexander the Great.

710 See, e.g., Vernant 1962; Lloyd 1979: ch. 4; 1987: 78 f. Cp. also Popper 1959: 149 f.; Lloyd 1991: 100-120. Jullien (1995) points out the extent to which confrontation, a common feature of ancient Greek political and military life, was conducive to the development of rationality, whereas ancient China, which avoided confrontation, did not develop this feature.
of encroaching on other sources of authority, would seem to be that which prevents traditions of rational debate and inquiry from coming about in the majority of human societies.  

How and why did systematic philosophy arise in India? Having noted the link between the sudden rise of a tradition of rational inquiry in ancient Greece on one hand, and the accompanying political situation on the other, one is tempted to look for a similar political situation in ancient India. Unfortunately this procedure holds little promise. We are not at all certain that anything like the Greek city-state ever existed in ancient India. This may be clear from the following quotations.

Vijay Kumar Thakur (1981: 250) states: "we are not sure whether commercial towns on Athenian pattern existed in India or not. It is possible that some towns in the Punjab, which the Greeks called 'independent towns', were similar types of commercial towns along the roads leading from India through the Punjab to Persia. This would mean that they had a completely different type of administrative machinery [from other towns in India]. Although we have no details of the administration of such towns, it can be presumed that their administrative system in a way tallied with the administration of large tribal oligarchies. The city administration, basically oligarchical in nature, might have carried the business of the town through discussion." Thakur then continues (p. 250-52): "Till the Mauryan period, the guilds were solely concerned with their economic activities while exercising some authority over their members. The situation, however, changed in the post-Mauryan times. A very important, and rather novel, development in the polity of this period was the emergence of almost autonomous governments in at least a dozen cities of northern India in the second and first centuries B.C. The administration of these cities was evidently in the hands of the guilds. Guilds of traders belonging to these cities issued copper coins, which is ordinarily done by the ruling power, for it is an important insignia of sovereignty. At least in five pre-Indo-Greek coins, the term nigama is clearly mentioned; four out of them bear the names of the different quarters of Taxila. Yet another coin found from Taxila records the term pañchanigama (sic). ... A somewhat similar practice seems to have prevailed at Kauśāmbī also, for it is known as nigama on one of its coins. Coins of the guild of the gandhikas, literally meaning perfumers but really general merchants, have also been found in the region around Kauśāmbī. ... Such coins representing certain cities are not to be found from the latter half of the 1st century B.C. This possibly indicates that with the establishment of the Sātavāhanas and the Kuśāṇa kingdoms in the first two centuries of the Christian era, these towns lost their autonomous character ..." Ray (1986: 49), similarly, observes that "numismatic

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711 Joseph Needham's question ("What were the inhibiting factors in Chinese civilisation which prevented a rise of modern science in Asia analogous to that which took place in Europe since the 16th century onwards ...?" cited in Wulf 1998: 9) may therefore find at least a partial answer in the absence of a tradition of rational inquiry in China. Wulf (1998: 63) proposes another answer ("Die Chinesen hatten einfach nicht die spezifischen historischen Voraussetzungen dafür, deren Verkettung die Entwicklung in Europa bewirkte") and enumerates thirteen factors that played an important role in the development of European science; this approach would seem to beg the question.

712 On the independent towns here mentioned see further Bongard-Levin 1986: 67 f.

713 On the role of aromas and perfumes in early trade, see Donkin 1999: ch. 1, esp. p. 15 f.

714 Ahmad Hasan Dani (1986: 58 ff.) expresses reservations with regard to this interpretation of nigama (which goes back to D. R. Bhandarkar); see further Thapar 1992: 96; Chakrabarti 1995: 311; H. P. Ray 1994: 20, 192.
evidence suggests that after the fall of the Mauryas several cities acquired power and issued their own die-struck coins; she mentions Mahismati, Tripuri, and Tagara or Ter in particular. Unfortunately, we know little about these cities beyond the fact that for a short while they struck their own coins. Was this independence accompanied by democratic institutions that encouraged free debate? So far there is no evidence to support this.

How then did a tradition of rational inquiry arise in India? If traditions of rational inquiry are not the kind of things that appear automatically and inevitably wherever some minimum conditions are satisfied, then what was responsible for the appearance of such a tradition in India? The question is not easy to answer, not least because of the scarcity of documents for the period that seems most relevant in this connection. We enter therefore into a realm of speculation, or at best informed guesses. The importance of the problem leaves us no alternative but to go ahead.

What do we know about the early history of systematic philosophy in India? Not very much. Of the two main schools of early Brahmical philosophy, Sāmkhya and Vaiśeṣika, the first one obviously had its roots in a pre-systematic period. The classical school of Sāmkhya preserves the traces of that earlier phase, and has the greatest difficulties to create a system that is coherent and resistant against outside criticism. Its efforts are only partially successful, and the school slowly disappears from view in the second half of the first millennium.

The other early Brahmical school, Vaiśeṣika, is quite different. Scholarly attempts to identify its pre-classical and pre-systematic roots lead nowhere, and it seems likely that it was created as a coherent system. An in-depth comparison with the Buddhist philosophy current in the early centuries of the Common Era shows that, in spite of numerous differences, the two share a number of fundamental positions. More precisely, they share some positions, while in some other respects they hold positions which are each other's mirror images. No such similarity exists between the Sāmkhya philosophy and either the Buddhist or the Vaiśeṣika system. Indeed, it appears that the Vaiśeṣika system was created in response to the particular system of Buddhist philosophy — called Sarvāstivāda — to which it is in some respects so close.

This in its turn suggests that the original impulse for the development of Indian rational philosophy came from Buddhism. This is fortunate, because a considerable number of Buddhist texts from around and before the beginning of the Common Era have been preserved. Many of these texts do not contain anything resembling the kind of rational philosophy we are looking for, but some do. In order to properly appreciate this, let us briefly and schematically consider how Buddhism developed after the death of its founder. Attempts had been made to preserve his words, both regarding the appropriate behavior of monks and nuns (vinaya) and his teaching in a narrower sense (sūtra). Beside this, efforts were made to distill the most important ideas and concepts from his teaching; this gave rise to lists of so-called dharmas, which were elaborately ordered and commented upon in the texts of the Abhidharma Piṭaka, ‘basket of things relating to the teaching’. Two collections of texts bearing this name have been preserved in their entirety, belonging to two different Buddhist schools: the Abhidharma Piṭaka of the Theravāda school, and the Abhidharma Piṭaka of the Sarvāstivāda school.

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715 Sāmkhya had its roots in the culture of Greater Magadha; see Greater Magadha pp. 35 ff., 61 ff.
716 See § III.4.1, below.
A closer study reveals important differences between these two collections. The most important difference for our present purposes is the presence in the Sarvastivāda basket of a new way of ordering and classifying the dharmas, the so-called pañcavastuka. Before the introduction of the pañcavastuka, and in the Theravāda texts all along, the dharmas were classified with the help of a schematization that was believed to derive from the Buddha himself, but which was unsatisfactory and even problematic in various respects. From a historical point of view the difficulties connected with this earlier schematization are easy to explain: the idea of enumerating and classifying dharmas had arisen well after the disappearance of the Buddha, and searching among his words for schemes to classify them was bound to fail.

The new classification, the pañcavastuka, brought some amount of reason and coherence into Sarvastivāda scholasticism. Moreover, this development was accompanied by others, which together changed the initial attempt to preserve the concepts taught by the Buddha into an attempt to create a coherent system of philosophy. For reasons that cannot be presented at this moment the list of dharmas became a list of all there is. Moreover, from an original doctrine of no-self the conclusion was drawn that no composite objects exist. The Buddha’s words to the extent that everything is impermanent and therefore painful, came to imply that everything is momentary and exists just one moment. New dharmas were introduced whose primary task it was to make the thus created ontological scheme coherent and intelligible. In brief, the Sarvastivāda school of Buddhism underwent a process of rationalization. The Theravāda school, on the other hand, underwent no such development.

How do we explain this difference between Sarvastivāda and Theravāda? The question invites an easy, almost obvious, answer, once we take into account where and when the Sarvastivādins worked and lived. Sarvastivāda belonged to the Northwest of the Indian subcontinent, i.e., Gandhāra and surrounding regions. Theravāda, on the other hand, belonged before its emigration to Sri Lanka to an area more to the south; Vidiśā has been suggested. There are reasons to believe that the first Sarvastivāda or proto-Sarvastivāda attempts at systematizing took place in or before the middle of the second century BCE. During this period there was a Hellenistic kingdom in Gandhāra and surroundings, which, originating from Bactria, had re-established itself there around the year 185 BCE, at the time of the collapse of the Maurya Empire. We know from elsewhere that Hellenistic kings used to cultivate philosophy and liked to be surrounded by wise men at their courts, with whom discussions took place. Archaeological excavations in Afghanistan, where the capital of the Bactrian Greeks has been identified, confirm that this was the case here, too. Not only has a Greek philosophical papyrus been found; it even appears that Clearchus of Soloi, a direct pupil of Aristotle, visited the

717 This and the following paragraphs are based on the chapter "Arranging the Doctrine" in Bronkhorst 2009: 61 ff.
719 Frauwallner 1956b: 18.
720 See § III.3.2, below. It is not clear when exactly Sarvastivāda as an identifiable school came into existence; cp. Willemen et al. 1998: 147 f.
722 Rapin 1992: 115-121. Karttunen (1997: 268 f.) points out that the Aśokan edicts in Greek show some knowledge of Greek philosophical terminology.
place. In general, "on s’étonne que la plupart des documents grecs rédigés en Iran ou en Asie centrale respectent aussi parfaitement qu’ils le font les habitudes linguistiques et graphiques, les tournures rhétoriques, les formules juridiques, les présupposés idéologiques et les références culturelles des textes du même type produits au même moment dans le monde grec méditerranéen"; and "Les historiens du mond hellénistique connaissent bien l’extrême homogénéité culturelle de ce monde et ses traits culturels dominants (pratique de la langue grecque ‘commune’, la koiné; formation rhétorique des élites; culture littéraire partagée, fondée sur la connaissance intime des œuvres des poètes; fréquentation des gymnases, des théâtres; pullulement des concours, sportifs, mais aussi littéraires, musicaux, dramatiques ..."

We have little direct information about the Greek kingdom in Gandhāra, apart from the names of some kings. It has yet been said: "Dans le Gandhara, aux deux derniers siècles avant notre ère et dans les toutes premières décennies de notre ère, plusieurs textes en langue indienne gandhari et en écriture kharoshthi attestent la survivance, dans l’administration locale, de titres grecs: stratège (stratego), anakaios (anamkaya, anakaya), episkopos (epesukupena [instr.]), méridarque (meridarkhena [instr.]). Les détenteurs de ces titres portent les uns des noms grecs, les autres des noms indiens. Une inscription au moins, la dédicace à une divinité hindoue d’un petit bol d’argent de tradition hellénistique, offert à cette divinité par un méridarque nommé Kalliphôn (un nom grec courant), est bilingue, grecque et gandhari; une dédicace analogue faite par un autre méridarque est purement grecque." We can safely conclude that there was a noticeable Greek cultural presence in Gandhāra from 185 BCE onward. We also know that there was a strong Buddhist presence, presumably from the time of Aśoka onward.

Was there any interaction between the Greeks and the Buddhists? This is a priori likely in view of the fact that Buddhism is, or at any rate was at that time, a proselytizing religion, which would not shun contact with people adhering to other beliefs or traditions. This openness to other traditions seems confirmed by the circumstance that the Buddhist art from Gandhāra shows strong Hellenistic influence. Influence took also place in

723 Robert 1973: 207-237; Rapin 1992: 128, 389; Karttunen 1997: 99, 288. If it is true that the Neo-Pythagorean Apollonios of Tyana visited Taxila in or around 44 CE (cp. Lamotte 1958: 518 f.; Karttunen 1997: 7 f., 306 n. 295; B. N. Mukherjee arrives at 46 CE, see Dani 1986: 69), one might be tempted to conclude that an interest in Hellenistic philosophy still existed at that time in Northwest India. Dani (1986: 70) speaks about "the preference that the ruling elite [of Taxila] had for Hellenistic models" during this period. However, "on the spiritual side, it is Buddhism that dominated" (ibid.).

724 Rougemont 2014: 17, 19.


726 Allon (2007), basing himself on the scarcity of direct evidence, argues that there was "weakness of Greek culture in the North-West" (p. 138). It should not however be forgotten that until the discovery of Ai Khanoum the notion of a vibrant Greek culture in Bactria, too, was thought of as a mirage; the discovery of this ancient city changed that (see Mair 2014: 3). Derrett (1992: 49 ff.) cites a number of Greek authors who speak of Indians who knew Greek and even translated Homer into their own speech (a theme that is taken up in all seriousness in Wulff Alonso 2015). With respect to Gandhāra, Taddei (2015: 66) speaks of “a local culture that was precisely deeply Hellenistic”. See also the following note.

727 Strictly speaking, in "Gandhāra there can be no Hellenistic ‘influences’ because ... Gandhāra itself is a province of eastern Hellenism" (Callieri 2007: 161; cited in Falk 2009a: 558 [554]);
other areas of culture, though probably later.\textsuperscript{728} Did the Greeks enter into discussion with the Buddhists? It is tempting to think that they did, and that the Greek tradition of rational debate obliged the Buddhists to rethink their positions. We have already seen that the Sarvāstivāda texts of that period and region show that their positions were indeed subjected to a thorough revision. But is there any evidence that supports the idea that the Greek tradition of debate may have played a role here?

There is. A Buddhist text has been preserved which purports to record a discussion between a Buddhist monk and the Indo-Greek king Menander. It has rightly been observed that "there is little in the text which is Greek, aside from the name of the king."\textsuperscript{729} Yet the very existence of such a text — I am speaking of "The Questions of King Milinda" (\textit{Milindapañha} in Pāli), which has been preserved in Pāli and in Chinese translation\textsuperscript{730} — allows us to conclude that Greeks and Buddhists discussed religious and related issues, or at the very least that the Buddhists of that region remembered the Greeks as participants in debates. It is not adventurous to conclude that the Greeks may have exerted an influence on the Sarvāstivāda Buddhists, quite simply by engaging them in debates.\textsuperscript{731} This conclusion seems confirmed by the fact that a number of Greeks appear to have converted to Buddhism.\textsuperscript{732}

\textsuperscript{728} Most notably on Indian astronomy; see Pingree 1978a, esp. vol. I, p. 3 f. Equally important might be that the Indo-Greeks may have started an era in India; see Daffinà 1988: 55 f.; Karttunen 1997: 296; Salomon 2005; 2012; Fussman 2011: 522 ff. See also Thundy 1993: 256 f.

\textsuperscript{729} Halbfass 1988: 19. The original of the two preserved Chinese translations of this text presented probably Sarvāstivāda doctrines; vgl. Lamotte 1958: 465; Demiéville 1925: 74.

\textsuperscript{730} It would be more correct to speak of a Milinda corpus, various versions of which have been identified. Peter Skilling (1998: 92 f.) observes that this corpus was more varied and extensive than previously thought, and lists the known versions.

\textsuperscript{731} Note that the \textit{Milindapañha} did not itself exert this influence. Quite the contrary, it appears that the Greeks exerted a direct influence on the Buddhists through contacts and discussions, not (or not primarily) through texts. The question as to why the Chinese, who translated the \textit{Milindapañha} into their own language, were not influenced by this text is therefore beside the point.

To my knowledge no Greek ideas have ever been shown to be part of Sarvāstivāda Buddhist thought, nor indeed of any other school of Indian philosophy. But we are at present not talking about ideas, but about the way people deal with them. What I propose is that the Buddhists of northwestern India adopted the method of rational debate and inquiry from the Greeks. They adopted this method and along with it the willingness (or obligation) to use it in areas that used to be the exclusive territory of tradition and religion, but they do not appear to have adopted anything else in the domain of philosophy. This method alone, however, profoundly affected their ideas. It forced them to rethink their intellectual and religious heritage, and organize it in a manner that made it more coherent and more resistant to critical questioning by outsiders.

Once the tradition of rational inquiry had been established, it was apparently capable of continuing when circumstances changed. It even spread all over India. This, too, is in need of explanation. The Buddhists of Gandhāra did not adopt a tradition of rational inquiry out of love for debate but rather, it appears, because they found themselves in a situation that compelled them to engage in debates and justify their positions. Once the Greeks were gone, they might have abandoned their newly acquired habit. In reality they did no such thing. The explanation may well be that Hellenistic culture did not fully disappear with the Greeks. Among the features that subsequent rulers maintained we must count the habit of organizing philosophical debates at their courts. We do not know how frequently such debates were held, but their very possibility was high in the minds of philosophical thinkers: a lost debate at court could have negative consequences. In due times even Brahmins became involved, and this meant the beginning of Brahmanical systematic philosophy.

What about the Upaniṣads? Don't they contain philosophy? The old Upaniṣads, whatever their exact dates, certainly predate the second century BCE, and therefore the establishment of the first Indo-Greek kingdom. How then can it be seriously maintained that Indian philosophy owes its origin to the presence of a Hellenistic kingdom in northwest India?

Two things must be distinguished. As said earlier, the contents of classical Indian philosophy, both Buddhist and Brahmanical, are, to the best of my knowledge, completely Indian. At the same time, the available evidence suggests that no tradition of rational inquiry (in the sense intended here, manifested by critical debate and attempts to create coherent views of reality) existed in India before the period we are considering. Vedic literature, and this includes the Upaniṣads, does not tend to develop coherent systems. These texts do value knowledge, that is to say, a certain kind of knowledge. Rationality, on the other hand, is conspicuous by its absence. It is true that the Brāhmaṇas and Upaniṣads record a number of famous debates, but these cannot in any way be called rational. No one, in these debates, is ever convinced by the arguments of his opponent. The winner of a debate, as Walter Ruben pointed out long ago (1928), is not the one who

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with confidence the Yona/Yavana can be only connected with Greeks in the earliest inscriptions, but to me it seems quite likely that in all our cases the word is somehow related to the Greeks." Michaels (2004: 30) writes: "We still read that the Brāhmaṇa texts reflect a magical image of the world, which was superseded by the allegedly philosophical perspective of the Upaniṣads, as if there were not still a 'magical' image of the world alongside a 'philosophical' one in India." As pointed out above, rational philosophy of the kind here considered does not exist always and everywhere.
knows better, but the one who knows more. Logical argumentation is completely absent. Apodictic statements are accepted without resistance. Indeed, the teacher does not need to present arguments in support of his teaching, because the very idea that he might teach something that is incorrect does not seem to have occurred to the thinkers of the Upaniṣads. Every thought is correct, but it may be insufficient, and may therefore have to be subordinated to the knowledge of the winner. Asking too many questions, on the other hand, can have dire results. Depending on the interpretation one puts upon the expression concerned, one's head may be shattered, or one may lose one's head in some other way. As to the problem why simple questioning may carry such grave consequences for the unsuccessful participant, Michael Witzel (1987a: 409) reminds us that the Vedic examples all deal with knowledge which is ‘secret’ in one way or another: it may be known only to an eminent person, a teacher who will not pass it on readily even when he is questioned, or it is known to a class of ritual specialists who will not share their esoteric knowledge with rival groups. All this is not of course conducive to the creation of coherent systems of thought.

Witzel has also drawn attention to the many similarities that exist between the Upaniṣadic debates and those recorded in the early Buddhist texts. There are differences, to be sure. But, as in the case of the late-Vedic texts, there is no question here of elaborating coherent systems of thought, which suggests that these early Buddhist debates were primarily meant for internal consumption, and that no need was felt to immunize the own position against criticism. We have seen that the elaboration of coherent systems of thought belongs to a later developmental phase of Buddhism.

Delicate questions remain unanswered for the moment. Can one seriously place the grammarian Pāṇini — whose grammar has been described as "one of the greatest monuments of human intelligence" — in a pre-rational period of India's intellectual history? Pāṇini, who appears to have lived in the second half of the fourth century BCE or later, may have predated Alexander's invasion, but this is not certain. Greek cultural influence in his case is highly unlikely, even if we assume that he lived after Alexander.

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736 Cf. Manné 1992. In the discussion between the Buddha and the Jaina Saccaka (Cūlasaccakasutta, Majjhima Nikāya no. 35), to take an example, there is an undeniable confrontation of ideas, and the Buddha does not hesitate to point out a contradiction in the speech of his adversary: "Pay attention, Aggivessana. When you have paid attention, Aggivessana, answer. For your last speech does not agree with your first, nor your first with your last" (MN I.232: manasikarohī Aggivessana, manasikaritvā kho Aggivessana byākarohi, na kho te sandhīyati purimena vā pacchimam pacchimena vā purimam; tr. Horner 1954: 285). See also Jayatilleke 1963: 205-276 ("The attitude to reason"); Watanebe 1983: 69 ff. ("The development of the dialogue form"). Elsewhere members of other religious currents are described as "clever, skilful, practised in disputing with others, hair-splitters" (e.g. DN I.26: santi hi kho pana samānabrāhmaṇa paññatā nipūṇā kataparappavāddā vālavedhīrūpā vobhindantā māññe ca ranti paññāgatena diṭṭhigatāni).
737 Richard F. Gombrich (1996: 18) points out that "the Buddha was continually arguing ad hominem and adapting what he said to the language of his interlocutor" and concludes that "this must have had enormous implications for the consistency, or rather the inconsistency, of his mode of expression". Whether or not this conclusion is correct, it seems clear that the method of arguing recorded in the early Buddhist texts is hardly conducive to the elaboration of coherent systems of thought.
738 See § 1.1.1, above; further Karttunen 1989: 142-146; 1997: 12 with note 49.
The Greek presence in Gandhāra following Alexander was of a very short duration, and the region had to wait until the collapse of the Maurya Empire before Greeks settled there again on a more permanent basis: this was around 185 BCE.

We should not be led astray by terms such as ‘rational’, ‘pre-rational’, and the like. The former is no compliment, the latter no criticism. I have already pointed out that the absence of a tradition of rational inquiry has nothing to do with stupidity or backwardness. People do not become more intelligent by being part of such a tradition. What changes first of all is their attitude. In a tradition of rational inquiry as envisaged here thinkers accept — have to accept — the legitimacy of questions and criticism directed even at convictions endorsed by tradition, revelation or insight. For wide-ranging philosophical systems to develop, such an attitude may be essential. For Pāṇini there was, as far as we can tell, no need to be questioning and critical with regard to his tradition. On the contrary, his grammar may have to be looked upon as an elaboration and systematization of the traditional understanding of language. It testifies to the intelligence of its creator, not to the tradition of rational inquiry to which he may or may not have belonged.

The preceding reflections suggest that both Indian and Western systematic philosophy derive one vital element from a common source. This vital element — viz., rational inquiry and analysis — would, moreover, seem to be absent everywhere else in the history of mankind except, of course, in developments that derive from the Greek and the Indian traditions. This suggests that a tradition of rational debate and inquiry has been able to establish itself independently only once in the history of mankind.

III.2.2. Brahmanism and rationality

We noted earlier that Brahmanism and rationality — i.e., institutionalized criticism — make strange bedfellows. Brahmanism adopted a tradition of rational inquiry after (probably centuries after) Buddhism did, presumably under pressure from royal courts that continued the Hellenistic tradition of public philosophical debates. As a result Brahmanism elaborated ontological systems — Vaiśeṣika, Sāmkhya and Lokāyata are best known — and established rules of debate, including logic (Nyāya). This is not the place to present these systems in any detail. For our present purpose it is more interesting to observe that Brahmanism adopted a tradition of rational inquiry only in the field of philosophy and nowhere else. In other words, Brahmanism accepted and even cultivated criticism in the one area where they might rely on it in order to win the approval of the political power on which they depended. But this was a choice made under pressure. Only in this area did they have to face opponents — primarily Buddhists — who held altogether different views. In areas where they did not have to confront such opponents they preferred tradition to criticism.

741 Frits Staal’s claim that Greek and Vedic mathematics have a common source (see § III.2.2, below) is to be distinguished from the one presented here, and is indeed quite independent of it. 742 Cp. Lloyd 1979: 258: “Ancient Greece is marked not just by exceptional intellectual developments, but also by what is in certain respects an exceptional political situation: and the two appear to be connected.”
743 For a brief presentation and analysis of their concerns, see Bronkhorst 2008; 2011b.
The above claim — that Brahmanism only accepted rational inquiry in areas where they needed it in order to confront unavoidable opponents, and nowhere else — may at first look difficult to prove. After all, which areas could there possibly be that were equally open to systematic criticism as philosophy?

One such area in which the ancient Greeks used all their critical acumen but the Brahmans did not, is mathematics.\textsuperscript{744} The mathematical literature preserved in India is extensive, but little studied;\textsuperscript{745} M. D. Srinivas gives the following estimate (1990: 30): "The recently published ‘Source Book of Indian Astronomy'\textsuperscript{746} lists about 285 works published in mathematics and mathematical astronomy, of which about 50 are works written prior to the 12th century A.D., about 75 are works written during 12-15th centuries and about 165 are works written during 16-19th centuries." A calculation on the basis of all the volumes of David Pingree's \textit{Census of the Exact Sciences in Sanskrit} (including the one that was not yet accessible to the authors of the "Source Book of Indian Astronomy") might reveal even larger numbers of works than this.\textsuperscript{747} Mathematics and mathematical astronomy\textsuperscript{748} clearly had their practitioners in classical India. Most of them were Brahmans. Buddhists did not participate in these studies. Buddhists ceded the profession of astrologist/astronomer/mathematician to Brahmans, as pointed out in \textit{Buddhism in the Shadow of Brahmanism} (§ 3.2). For this reason the competition with Buddhists, which contributed so much to the form and content of Brahmanical philosophy, was absent in the field of mathematics.\textsuperscript{749}

Let us now look at some mathematical texts. The Āryabhaṭīya of Āryabhaṭa (= Āryabhaṭa I) dates from 499 (Pingree) or 510 (Billard) CE, and contains a chapter on mathematics entitled \textit{Ganitapāda} which is "the earliest text of this genre that we have" (Pingree 1981: 56).\textsuperscript{750} The Āryabhaṭīya is written in āryā verses that mainly contain rules

\textsuperscript{744} Medicine may be another such area. Scharfe (2002: 61 f.) illustrates this with some examples, among them the following quotation from Vāgbhaṭa's \textit{Aṣṭāṅgaḥṛdaya} (Uttarasthāna 40.81): “This [book] shall — because it is established by tradition [and] because one sees obvious results — be applied like a mantra and not be investigated in any way.”

\textsuperscript{745} Cp. Pingree 1981: 2: "classical astronomy and mathematics had virtually ceased to be studied or taught by the end of the nineteenth century. A new group of Indian and foreign scholars has, however, begun to work in these areas since World War II".


\textsuperscript{747} Note further that "[a]ccording to Pingree's estimation ... there still exist today some 100,000 Sanskrit manuscripts in the single field of \textit{fyotihśāstra} (astronomy, astrology, and mathematics)" (Yano 1987: 50).

\textsuperscript{748} On Indian mathematical literature see Plofker 2009; on astronomical literature, Pingree 1981.

\textsuperscript{749} There were Jaina mathematicians, and a moderate amount of competition between Jainas and Brahmans in this field; see Bronkhorst forthcoming c.

\textsuperscript{750} Cp. Prakash Sarasvati 1986: 157: "for the first time we find Āryabhaṭa ... in his Āryabhaṭīya describing [mathematics] as a special section (Ganitapāda). Brahmagupta ... also followed Āryabhaṭa in this respect and gave the science of calculation (ganita) a special place in his treatise on astronomy. The Siddhānta treatises earlier than those of Āryabhaṭa and Brahmagupta do not contain a chapter exclusively devoted to ganita (the Sūrya-Siddhānta and the Siddhāntas of Vasiṣṭha, Pitāmaha and Romaka are thus without ganita chapters)." Also Hayashi 1995: 148: "Bhāskara (A.D. 629) tells us that Maskarī, Pūraṇa, Muddaga and other ‘ācāryas’ (teachers) composed mathematical treatises, but none of them is extant now. We can only have a glimpse of Indian mathematics of those early times through the extant astronomical works of Āryabhaṭa, Bhāskara, and Brahmagupta, only a few chapters of which are devoted to mathematics proper." It
formulated in a highly condensed form. The rules of the Ganitapāda in part concern arithmetic, in part geometry. Indeed, the commentator Bhāskara (to be introduced below) clearly states that mathematics (ganita) is twofold: arithmetic and geometry, or perhaps more precisely: arithmetic of quantities and arithmetic of geometrical figures.\textsuperscript{751}

From among Āryabhaṭa’s rules, let us concentrate on the probably best known theorem of Euclidean geometry, viz. the Pythagorean theorem. This theorem finds expression in the first half of verse 17 of the Ganitapāda, which reads:\textsuperscript{752} "The square of the base [of a right-angled trilateral] and the square of [its] upright side is the square of the hypotenuse." No more is said about it: no proof is given, no examples and no diagrams.

Staal (1965: 114 = 1988: 158) looks upon the concision of Indian mathematical texts as an adaptation of Pāṇini’s method. Others maintain that this conciseness is a sign of the scientific character of Āryabhaṭa's text, as does Pierre-Sylvain Filliozat in the following passage:\textsuperscript{753}

Cette forme littéraire, en particulier le recours à l’ellipse de l’expression et de la pensée, a une autre raison d’être, en plus de l’obéissance à la convention culturelle d’un pays et d’une époque. Elle a une utilité de caractère scientifique, en ce qu’elle relève de la formalisation. Les intellectuels indiens ont reconnu très tôt l’aide apportée à la pensée par l’économie de l’expression, l’outil efficace qu’est un langage technique abrégé. Le premier exemple de formalisation scientifique dans l’histoire universelle des sciences semble bien être le formulaire de linguistique qu’est le sūtra de Pāṇini et qui se caractérise par l’emploi d’une métalangue et le passage obligé au niveau de la plus grande généralité afin de permettre l’application d’une formule unique au plus grand nombre possible de cas particuliers. Āryabhaṭa n’a pas poussé la formalisation aussi loin que le grammairien. Mais il ne l’a pas ignorée. Il n’a pas de métalangue à proprement parler, mais il a son vocabulaire technique et surtout il vise le plus haut degré de généralité dans ses propositions. Ceci est une des valeurs scientifiques de son œuvre.

Filliozat is right in that the Pythagorean theorem is presented in its most general form. Instead of enumerating a number of values valid for specific rectangular triangles (3 : 4 : 5; 5 : 12 : 13; etc.) Āryabhaṭa formulates this rule for all possible rectangular triangles, and for all possible values of its sides. One might consider the possibility that the very


\textsuperscript{752} Āryabhaṭiya 2.17ab: \textit{yaś caiva bhujāvargāḥ koṭivargaś ca karnavargaḥ saḥ}.

\textsuperscript{753} Filliozat 1988a: 255-256. Another way of looking at the same characteristic is expressed in Pingree 1978: 533, which speaks about the corrupt tradition of the earliest surviving Sanskrit texts: “The cause of this corruption is usually that the texts had become unintelligible; and this unintelligibility is not unrelated to the style developed by Indian astronomers. The texts proper were composed in verse in order to facilitate memorization, with various conventions for rendering numbers into metrical syllables. The exigencies of the meter often necessitated the omission of important parts of mathematical formulas, or contributed to the imprecision of the technical terminology by forcing the poet to substitute one term for another. ...”
(re-)discovery of, and interest for, the Pythagorean theorem (and of other theorems) by Indian mathematicians is due to the obligation to formulate their knowledge in as concise, and therefore as general, a form as possible.\footnote{Filliozat 1995: 46 mentions the ‘high degree of generality’ — which includes a general formulation of the Pythagorean theorem, ”the first theorem enunciated in the history of Sanskrit mathematics” (p. 48) — as ”a quality which [a Śulba-sūtra] shares only with Pāṇini’s model”.} But it must be added that the \textit{Ganitapāda}, perhaps because of this same ‘Pāṇinian’ conciseness, presents the Pythagorean theorem (and many other theorems, as we will see) without proof, and therefore without an indication as to why we should accept it. One might be tempted to conclude from this that the search for brevity, which turned out to be such a great advantage for grammar, was a mixed blessing for mathematics. We will see below that such a conclusion would not do full justice to the available evidence.

[The part of Brahmagupta’s \textit{Brāhmaśpuṭasiddhānta} (628) dedicated to geometry (12.21-47) is as concise as Āryabhāta’s text, and much the same could be said about it. The Pythagorean theorem is formulated as follows,\footnote{Sharma 1966, vol. III p. 829 (= \textit{Brāhmaśpuṭasiddhānta} 12.24): \textit{karnākręte kotikṛtim visādhya mūlam bhūjo bhūjaśya kṛtim/ prōhya padām kotiḥ kotibhāukrtiṣyutipadām karnah}/. Tr. Colebrooke 1817: 298. As a matter of fact, the Pythagorean theorem occurs several times, in several guises, in this portion of the text; e.g. 12.22cd: \textit{svāvādāvargonād bhujāvargān mūlam avalambah} (tr. Colebrooke: ”The square-root, extracted from the difference of the square of the side and square of its corresponding segment of the base, is the perpendicular”); 12.23cd: \textit{karnākṛtir bhāmukhayutidalavargonā padām lambah} (tr. Colebrooke: ”[In any tetragon but a trapezium,] subtracting from the square of the diagonal the square of half the sum of the base and summit, the square-root of the remainder is the perpendicular”); 12.42ab: \textit{jāvyāsakrtivīṣeṣān mūlavāśāntarārādhāṃ iṣun alpaḥ} (tr. Colebrooke: ”Half the difference of the diameter and the root extracted from the difference of the diameter and the chord is the smaller arrow”).} “Subtracting the square of the upright from the square of the diagonal, the remainder is the square-root of the side; or subtracting the square of the side, the root of the remainder is the upright: the root of the sum of the squares of the upright and side is the diagonal." Here too, no proof, no examples, no diagrams. A third text on mathematics which may perhaps date from a period close to Brahmagupta (Hayashi 1995: 149), the \textit{Bakhshāli Manuscript}, contains in its preserved portions little about geometry (see Hayashi 1995: 97): essentially only the \textit{sūtra} which Hayashi calls N14 (p. 401; Sanskrit p. 221 f.; English translation p. 322 f.). This \textit{sūtra}, which prescribes a way to calculate the volume of a particular solid, is accompanied by an example. The fragmentary state of this text does not allow us to draw far-reaching conclusions.]

It is not fair to judge highly condensed fundamental texts from classical India without taking into consideration that such texts were always accompanied by one or more commentaries, whether oral or written. This is true for Pāṇini’s \textit{Aṣṭādhvyāyī}, which was the starting point for an extensive commentatorial tradition, and which must have been accompanied by some kind of commentary from its very beginning. Patañjali’s \textit{Mahābāhāṣya} — which is a commentary on the \textit{Aṣṭādhvyāyī}, even though a special kind of commentary — was composed well before the beginning of the Common Era. More straightforward commentaries on the \textit{Aṣṭādhvyāyī} no doubt existed from an early time, and even if the oldest surviving commentary of this nature — the \textit{Kāśikā Vṛtti} — is a relatively late text (around 700 CE), it is known that earlier such commentaries existed.\footnote{Bronkhorst 2002b: § 2.}
Āryabhaṭa's text, too, may initially have been studied under the guidance of a teacher, who would orally provide many of the elements that are lacking in the verses. Written commentaries were subsequently composed, but the earliest ones have not survived. The earliest mathematical commentary that has survived is the Āryabhaṭīya Bhāṣya of Bhāskara (= Bhāskara I), which dates from 629 CE, i.e. almost exactly from the same year as Brahmagupta's Brāhmaṇa-puṣṭi-siddhānta. By contrast, the earliest surviving commentary on Brahmagupta's Brāhmaṇa-puṣṭi-siddhānta — Prthūdakasvāmin’s Vivarana — dates from 864, and belongs to the later period of Śrīdhara and others which will not be considered here.

It is in Bhāskara's Āryabhaṭīya Bhāṣya, then, that we will look for the elements that are so obviously missing from Āryabhaṭa's Gaṇita-pāda. Three of these elements have already been mentioned. What is primarily missing in the fundamental text are a proof of the theorem concerned, examples of how and where it can be applied, and, where they would be necessary, one or more geometrical diagrams to facilitate visualizing the theorem and its proof; in view of the Indian commentatorial customs in other areas we may also expect to find explanations and (re-)interpretations of the exact formulation of the basic text, where necessary.

With this fourfold expectation in mind we turn to the Āryabhaṭīya Bhāṣya on Gaṇita-pāda 17ab. We do indeed find here an explanation of the words of the basic text (which in this case is very short, given the unproblematic formulation of the theorem), followed by examples (tasks with solutions, all of which concern triangles the lengths of whose sides relate to each other as 3 : 4 : 5) and diagrams. The only thing that is lacking is a proof of the theorem!

For a reader schooled in Euclidean geometry this is very surprising. An important, even fundamental theorem of geometry is presented, explained and illustrated by Bhāskara with no proof! This absence of proof does not stop Bhāskara from frequently

757 An exception may have to be made for the examples accompanying the sūtras of the Bakhshālī Manuscript.
758 This is the name here adopted for the combined text consisting of the Daśagītikā-sūtra-vyākhyā and the Āryabhaṭa-tantra-bhāṣya, expressions apparently used by Bhāskara himself to designate the two parts of his commentary (on chapter 1 and on the remaining chapters respectively); see Shukla 1976: xlix.
759 The Gaṇita-pāda of Bhāskara's Āryabhaṭīya Bhāṣya has been studied and translated by Agathe Keller (2006).
760 Balabhadra’s eighth century commentary on the Brāhmaṇa-puṣṭi-siddhānta is now lost; Pingree 1983.
761 It is known that a number of classical commentators imitated the style of the Mahābhāṣya, sometimes calling themselves ‘Vārttika’ (Bronkhorst 1990). Bhāskara's Bhāṣya does not adopt this so-called ‘Vārttika-style’.
762 Āryabhaṭīya Bhāṣya p. 96 l. 15: yaś ca bhujāvarghaḥ yaś ca kośīvarghaḥ etau vargau ekatra kaṇaṇa-vargho bhavati.
763 In order to avoid misunderstanding it must here be emphasized that I am aware of the fact that proof (Euclidean or other) does not appear to be essential to geometry in many cultures; see below. Even Euclidian geometry itself lost its proofs during the centuries following the collapse of the Roman Empire in the West, judging by the fact that one of its last mathematicians, Boethius, wrote “a Geometry based on Euclid and including only statements, without proof, of some of the simpler portions of the first four books of the Elements” (Merzbach & Boyer 2011: 172). The present discussion on the absence of proof in Bhāskara and elsewhere finds its justification in remarks by Ingalls and Staal to be studied in § III.4.3.
using this theorem elsewhere in his commentary. He cites it — in the form given to it by Áryabhaṭa in verse 17ab — in his comments on Ganitapāda 6ab (p. 56 l. 5), 6cd (p. 58 l. 14-15), 17cd (p. 103 l. 12-13), and uses it implicitly at many other occasions. The theorem is already implied in the explanation-cum-etymology which Bhāskara gives of the difficult term karaṇī 'surd' in his introductory remarks to verse 1: \(^{764}\) "The karaṇī is [so called] because it makes (karoti) the equation of the diagonal (c) and the sides (a and b) [of a rectangle] \((a^2 + b^2 = c^2)\)."

The absence of a proof in the case of the Pythagorean theorem raises the question whether proofs are presented in connection with other theorems. This question has been investigated by Takao Hayashi in the Introduction of his book The Bakhshālī Manuscript (1995), where he studies the use of the terms pratyaya(-karaṇa) and upapatti in particular. We will consider some of the passages concerned below, but note here already that Hayashi arrives at the following conclusion (p. 76): "As a matter of fact ... we can hardly find proofs or derivations of mathematical rules in Bhāskara's commentary on the Áryabhaṭīya."

To illustrate this point, we shall consider a passage that might at first sight create the impression that it does provide — or rather: hint at — a proof of a rule; we will see that it doesn't. The rule concerned is presented in the second half of verse 17: "In a circle the product of the two sagittas of the two arcs [that together constitute the circle] equals the square of half the chord." \(^{765}\)

Fig. 1

![Diagram](https://example.com/diagram.png)

Fig. 1: CD x DE = AD\(^2\)

That is to say: CD x DE = AD\(^2\). This rule can easily be proved with the help of the Pythagorean theorem:

\[
AC^2 = AD^2 + CD^2 \\
AE^2 = AD^2 + DE^2 \\
CE^2 = (CD + DE)^2 = AC^2 + AE^2 = AD^2 + CD^2 + AD^2 + DE^2 \\
CD^2 + DE^2 + 2 \times CD \times DE = CD^2 + DE^2 + 2 \times AD^2 \\
CD \times DE = AD^2 \quad \text{q.e.d.}
\]

Bhāskara does not however do so, at least not at the beginning of his comments on this rule. Instead he gives a large variety of examples (tasks with solutions), which cover more than six pages of the edition. Having provided (numerical) solutions to all the problems Bhāskara then states: \(^{766}\) "The verification (pratyayakarana) in the case of all these surfaces [is obtained] with the [rule according to which] 'the square of the hypotenuse equals the sum of the squares of the two rectangular sides'." In spite of the impression which this statement might create, this is not a reference to the proof of the theorem, but a reminder that the Pythagorean theorem can be used, instead of the present

\(^{764}\) Áryabhaṭīya Bhāṣya p. 44 l. 17: karnabhaṭyayōḥ samatvam karoti yasmāt tataḥ karaṇī; tr. Hayashi 1995: 62. The dual is strange, and one wonders whether the original reading may not have been: bhūjaḥyāḥ Karnasamatvaṃ karoti yasmāt tataḥ karaṇī. For a discussion of the term karaṇī in various mathematical texts, see Hayashi 1995: 60-64.

\(^{765}\) Ganiṭapāda 17cd: vṛtte ṣarasamvarga 'ṛdhajyāvargāḥ sa khalu dhanuṣoḥ.

\(^{766}\) Áryabhaṭīya Bhāṣya p. 103 l. 12-13: pratyayakaranaṃ ca sarveśv eva kṣetreṣu "yaś caiva bhujāvargāḥ koṭīvargāḥ ca karṇavargāḥ saḥ" ity anenaiviṭō. 
theorem, to carry out the calculations and find the solutions to the problems discussed. That is to say, the Pythagorean theorem can be used to verify the solutions that had been reached with the help of the other theorem. This may be a justification of sorts of that theorem, but hardly a proof in any of its usual senses.\textsuperscript{767}

The presentation of geometrical theorems without proof raises the question whether perhaps proofs were known to the authors concerned, but were not recorded in their texts because their literary model — Pāṇini's grammar and its commentaries have been proposed — did not really leave place for them. It is at least conceivable that Āryabhaṭa and Bhāskara (or the mathematicians from whom they took their material) practiced geometry on a more abstract level than is evident from their writings, making sure that the theorems they presented to their readers were based on solid proofs.\textsuperscript{768} One would be free to think so, were it not that these two authors present some theorems that are quite simply wrong.\textsuperscript{769} This cannot but mean that these theorems were not based on solid proofs, for no such proofs are possible. (It does not exclude the possibility that some form of verification existed; this system of verification, if it existed, was not however capable of discovering and correcting these errors.)

Āryabhaṭa is wrong where he gives the volume of a pyramid as:\textsuperscript{770} “Half the product of the height and the [surface of the triangular base] is the volume called ‘pyramid’.,” The correct volume of a pyramid is a third, not half, of this product. In spite of this, Bhāskara accepts Āryabhaṭa's rule and carries out some (incorrect) calculations with its help. The same is true of Āryabhaṭa's incorrect rule for the volume of a sphere.\textsuperscript{771}

Āryabhaṭa's incorrect rules have drawn the attention of scholars, and some of them have tried to interpret the rules differently, so as to obtain a correct result.\textsuperscript{772}

\textsuperscript{767} Earlier authorities have already drawn attention to the absence of proofs in early classical Indian mathematics. So e.g. Kline 1972: 190, as cited in Srinivas 1990: 76 n. 2: “There is much good procedure and technical facility, but no evidence that [the Hindus] considered proof at all.” See however below.

\textsuperscript{768} So Hayashi 1994: 122: “Neither the Āryabhaṭiya nor the Brāhmaṇaśuṭaśiddhānta contains proofs of their mathematical rules, but this does not necessarily mean that their authors did not prove them. It was probably a matter of the style of exposition.”

\textsuperscript{769} D. E. Smith (1923: 158) claims to find faulty theorems in Brahmagupta's Brāhmaṇaśuṭaśiddhānta, but most of his cases concern a rule (12.21ab) which is presented as approximate (sthūla) by its author. His one remaining case — a formula for the area of quadrilaterals that is presented as being valid without restriction, but is in reality only valid for cyclic quadrilaterals (12.21cd) — may have to be interpreted differently; J. Pottage, at the end of a detailed study (1974), reaches the following conclusion (p. 354): “I have been unable to accept that Brahmagupta could have imagined that his rules would apply to all quadrilaterals whatsoever”.

\textsuperscript{770} Āryabhaṭiya Ganitaapāda 6cd: ūrdhva-bhujātatsamavargārdham sa ghanah śaḍaśir iti.

\textsuperscript{771} Cp. Āryabhaṭiya Ganitaapāda 7: samaparināhaysārdham viskambhārddhahatam eva vrṭtapahalam/ tannijamulena hatam ghanolapahalam nirvaṇaśam// “Half the even circumference multiplied by half the diameter is precisely the fruit (i.e., the area) of a circle. That (the area) multiplied by its own square root is the exact volume (lit. the without-a-remainder solid fruit) of a sphere.” (tr. Hayashi 1997: 198; similarly Clark 1930: 27). Bhāskara also provides an approximate, ‘practical’ (vyāvahārīka), rule for calculating the volume of a sphere (p. 61 l. 27): vyāsārdhaḥhanam bhittā navaguniya ayogudasya ghanaganitam "Having divided [into two] the cube of half the diameter multiplied by nine, the calculation of the volume of an iron ball [has been carried out]."

\textsuperscript{772} Filliozat and Mazars (1985) mention Conrad Müller (1940) and Kurt Elfering (1968; 1975; 1977).
Filliozat and Mazars object to such a reinterpretation in a joint publication (1985), pointing out that Bhāskara’s comments do not support it. They further make the following important observation (p. 40): "Il faut comprendre Āryabhaṭa, non pas dans ses seuls résultats transposés en formules modernes, mais dans sa propre culture intellectuelle." In a more recent publication, Filliozat states (1995: 39): "It is an error to actualise the ideas of past scientists, to transpose in modern terminology their ancient expressions."

Filliozat and Mazars are no doubt right in this, and one would expect that they might try to explain Āryabhaṭa's errors in the light of ‘sa propre culture intellectuelle’. Unfortunately they don't do so. These errors remain a total mystery to them, as is clear from the concluding words of their article (p. 46):

L’existence de telles erreurs chez le grand mathématicien est certes surprenante. Elle l’est encore plus chez Bhāskara, puisque nous savons que son contemporain Brahmagupta connaissait, au moins pour le volume de la pyramide, la formule exacte.

And yet it seems obvious that these mistakes throw light on the intellectual culture of their authors. It seems inevitable to conclude that the theorems propounded by Āryabhaṭa and Bhāskara were not accompanied by proofs, not even in private, not even outside the realm of the written commentary. They were handed down as received truths, with the result that incorrect theorems were not identified as such as a matter of routine by any student who checked the proofs. Bhāskara confirms that he regards the theorems and other information contained in Āryabhaṭa's work as received truths in his commentary on the first chapter, the Gitikāpāda. Here he states, under verse 2, that all knowledge derives from Brahmā; Āryabhaṭa pleased Brahmā on account of his great ascetic practices and could then compose, for the well-being of the world, the ten Gitikāsūtras on planetary movement (chapter 1), as well as the one hundred and eight āryā verses on arithmetic (ch. 2), time (ch. 3) and the celestial globe (ch. 4). Elsewhere (p. 189 l. 14-15) he calls Āryabhaṭa atūndriyārthadarsin "seeing things that are beyond the reach of the senses". It is further noteworthy that in the third chapter, the Kālakriyāpāda, Bhāskara cites, under verse 5, a verse from an earlier (non-identified) astronomical text — about the months in

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773 See also Hayashi 1997: 197-198. Smeur 1970: 259-260 presents a hypothesis to explain how the incorrect rule for the volume of a sphere might have come into being.

774 Keller (2006: II: 27-28) suggests the following explanation: "Although we do not know why and how Āryabhaṭa derived this wrong relation, we can make the following hypothesis: the solid equilateral is probably seen as deriving geometrically from the area by the same process that derives from two lines a surface. This continuity between the two-dimensional field and the three-dimensional field may be the key to the relation given here. As [one] derives the area of an equilateral triangle by the product of half the base and the height, the volume of the pyramid seems to be derived by half its base (which is here the area of an equilateral triangle) and its height.” Similarly Plofker 1996: 62 (cf. 2009: 125): “This error ... suggests that in this case reasoning by analogy led Āryabhaṭa astray.” Shukla (1972: 44) observes: “It is strange that the accurate formula for the volume of a sphere was not known in India. This seems to suggest that Greek Geometry was not known at all in India ...”

775 Āryabhaṭiya Bhāṣya p. 111 l. 23 - p. 12 l. 1: anenācāryena mahadbhis tapobhir brahmārādhitaḥ/ .../ ato 'nena lokāṇugrahāya sphaṭagrahagatyarthavācakāni daśa gitikāsūtraṇi ganitakālakriyāgolārthavācakām āryāṣṭaśataṁ ca vinibaddham/
which the sun passes the summer and winter solstices — and calls it Smṛti, more precisely; our Smṛti (p. 182 l. 9: asmākām smṛtih); he bolsters this position with an argument based on Mimāṃsā, unfortunately not completely clear in all its details, but which in outline looks as follows: this Smṛti has to be accepted, for it is neither in conflict with the Śrutī, nor with perception. Calling a text Smṛti and insisting that it conflicts neither with the Śrutī nor with perception amounts to granting it the same authority as the Veda itself, and maintaining that it cannot be wrong.\footnote{See on this Pollock 1990, e.g. p. 327: “Both terms [śrutī and smṛti, JB] refer in their primary connotation to one and the same thing — the Veda, as actually recited or simply recalled …”}

It seems clear from what precedes that there is little space in Bhāskara’s geometry for proofs, and none at all for definitions and axioms, the starting points of perfect proofs. This raises the following fundamental question. If the geometrical figures dealt with by the Indian mathematicians under consideration are not constituted of elements laid down in definitions,\footnote{The Greek situation tends to be idealized. A closer study of the evidence leads Netz (1999: 95) to the following assessment: “Greek mathematical works do not start with definitions. They start with second-order statements, in which the goals and the means of the work are settled. Often, this includes material we identify as ‘definitions’. In counting definitions, snatches of text must be taken out of context, and the decision concerning where they start is somewhat arbitrary.”} what then is the geometry of Āryabhaṭa and Bhāskara about? If its triangles, circles, pyramids and spheres are not abstractions, what then are they?

We may find a clue to the answer in the following passage of Bhāskara’s Bhāṣya on Gaṇita-pāda verse 11:\footnote{Āryabhaṭya Bhāṣya p. 77 l. 9-15: vayam tu brūmah: asti kāṣṭhatulyajyeta/ yadi kāṣṭhatulyajyā na syāt tadā samāyām avanau vaavasthānam evāvyogadasya na syāt/ tenānumīmehe kaścit pradesah so 'stīti yenāśāv avogadah samāyām avanāv avatiṣṭhate/ sa ca pradesah paridheh śanvavatayamsah/ kāṣṭhatulyajyā 'nyair apy ācāryair abhyavagatā: tatparidhe śatabhāgaṁ sprśati dhāraṁ golakaśaṅkāraṁ iti.}

We, on the other hand, maintain that there is a chord equal to the arc [which it subtends]. If there were no chord equal to the arc [it subtends], an iron ball would not be stable on level ground. We infer from this that there is an area such that the iron ball rests by means of it on the level ground. And that area is the ninety-sixth part of the circumference.

Other teachers, too, have accepted a chord equal to the arc [which it subtends, as is clear from] the following quotation: ‘From the body of a sphere, a hundredth part of its circumference touches the earth’.\footnote{The quoted line is problematic, not only because of the neuter ending of śatabhāgam, but even more so on account of golakāsaṅkāraṁ where one would expect something like golakāsaṅkārātva. Shukla (1976: Ixiv) translates: "Due to the sphericity of its body, a sphere touches the Earth by one-hundredth part of its circumference"; Hayashi (1997: 213) has: "A hundredth part of its circumference touches the ground because of its having a spherical body."}

Both Bhāskara’s own words and the line he cites seem to confuse the surface of a sphere and the circumference of a circle. This may for the moment be looked upon as a detail.\footnote{Kim Plofker reminds me that one cannot balance a circle on level ground because it would fall over sideways; no confusion therefore may be involved here.}

\footnote{Kim Plofker reminds me that one cannot balance a circle on level ground because it would fall over sideways; no confusion therefore may be involved here.}
by their behavior in the world of our daily experience. A sphere, we learn, has to have flat surfaces, for only thus can it be stable on level ground.

The question of the absence of proofs in Indian geometry acquires a different dimension once it is clear that Euclidean and classical Indian geometry may not really concern the same objects. The objects of classical Indian geometry — its triangles, circles, spheres etc. — are no mere abstractions, but things present in the outside world. (The fact that the use of triangles formed by such imprecise things as shadows and flames inevitably implies that the mathematician worked with idealized objects, does not necessarily contradict this.) As such it is possible to compare them to the objects of grammatical analysis rather than to Euclidean diagrams. The objects of grammar — sounds, words, phrases — are there in the outside world, and grammar is therefore a science which deals with objects whose existence is quite independent of the volition of the grammarian. To invoke Patañjali's words: one does not visit a grammarian when in need of words as one visits a potter when one needs a jar. In other words, the objects of grammar, unlike pots, are not fashioned in accordance with the wishes of their users. Elsewhere Patañjali states: "Words are authoritative for us; what the word says is our authority." Once again, words do not adjust to grammarians, but grammarians follow the dictates of words. Grammar presents multiple linguistic data with the help of rules that are as general as possible, but that cannot go against the data of language. Similarly, the rules of classical Indian geometry describe numerous geometrical forms that exist in the outside world with the help of rules that are as general as possible. The fact that these rules describe concrete objects rather than mathematical abstractions has as its consequence that they may often be generalizations from concrete observations, rather than general statements derived from first principles.

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781 Mahā-bh I p. 7 l. 28 - p. 8 l. 1: ghaṭena kāryam kariṣyan kumbhakārakulam gatvāha kuru ghaṭam kāryam anena kariṣyāmīti/ na tadāv chabdān prayokṣyamāno vayākarānaku ṣam gatvāha kuru śābdān prayokṣya iti/
782 Mahā-bh I p. 11 l. 1-2.

783 Concerning the nature of the objects of Greek geometry, read the following remarks by Reviel Netz (1999: 54-56): "On the one hand, the Greeks speak as if the object of the proposition is the diagram. ... On the other hand, Greeks act in a way which precludes this possibility ... Take Pünkitchen for instance. Her dog is lying in her bed, and she stands next to it, addressing it: ‘But grandmother, why have you got such large teeth?’ What is the semiotic role of ‘grandmother’? It is not metaphorical — Pünkitchen is not trying to insinuate anything about the grandmother-like (or wolf-like) characteristics of her dog. But neither is it literal, and Pünkitchen knows this. Make-believe is a tertium between literality and metaphor: it is literality, but an as-if kind of literality. My theory is that the Greek diagram is an instantiation of its object in the sense in which Pünkitchen's dog is the wolf — that the diagram is a make-believe object; it is functionally identical to it; what is perhaps most important, it is never questioned. ... [The text] does not even hint what, ultimately, its objects are; it simply works with an ersatz, as if it were the real thing ... Undoubtedly, many mathematicians would simply assume that geometry is about spatial, physical objects, the sort of thing a diagram is. Others could have assumed the existence of mathematical objects. The centrality of the diagram, however, and the roundabout way in which it was referred to, meant that the Greek mathematician would not have to speak up for his ontology." Whatever the Greeks may have thought (or not thought) about the objects of geometry, geometry came to be looked upon as dealing with abstractions, so much so that the expression 'Euclid myth' has been coined to designate the false conviction that these objects have anything to do with the outside world: "What is the Euclid myth? It is the belief that the books of Euclid contain truths about the universe that are clear and indubitable. Starting from self-evident truths,
this way, may in the classical Indian context be a generalization of measurements taken from various rectangular triangles; the notion of a general proof for this theorem might have appeared completely out of place to the early Indian mathematicians, just as to a grammarian a general proof of the grammatical rule that $i$ followed by $a$ is replaced by $y$, not only in ādhyātra out of ādhi atra but also in all other similar situations, would have looked strange.

Having said this, it should not of course be overlooked that geometrical figures and bodies are not the same kind of things as linguistic expressions. Numerous geometrical rules become obvious with the help of minimal manipulation of figures. Take the rule that the area of a triangle is half the product of its height and its base. This rule follows almost automatically from a look at the following diagram, and there is no need to assume that it is a generalization of a number of measurements. And yet the notion of general proof does not characterize Bhāskara's discussions of geometry.

**Fig. 2**

Fig. 2: the area of triangle ABC is half the area of rectangle EFCB.

A passage in Bhāskara's comments on *Gaṇita-pāda* verse 10 is interesting in this context. We read here:

[Question:] Why is the approximate circumference [of a circle] given, not its exact circumference?

[Response:] People think as follows: there is no way in which the exact circumference [can] be calculated.

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and proceeding by rigorous proof, Euclid arrives at knowledge which is certain, objective and eternal. Even now, it seems that most educated people believe in the Euclid myth. Up to the middle or late nineteenth century, the myth was unchallenged. Everyone believed it. It has been the major support for metaphysical philosophy, that is, for philosophy which sought to establish some a priori certainty about the nature of the universe.” (Davis and Hersh 1981: 325, cited in Srinivas 1990: 81 n. 14). For a more recent discussion of the objects of (modern) mathematics, see Shapiro 1997; and for a perhaps extreme view as to the relation between mathematics and the universe, see Tegmark 2014.

784 *Cp. Āryabhaṭīya Bhāṣya* p. 48 l. 15-16: ardhāyatacaturāsravatā tribhujasya.

785 The procedure illustrated in fig. 2 is close to the one which the Chinese mathematician Liu Hui justifies with the reason "Use the excess to fill up the void" (Chemla 1999: 96 f.). Chemla (1997) distinguishes between formal *proofs* (in italics) and proofs that are provided "in order to understand" the statement proved, to know why it is true and not only *that* it is true" (p. 229).

786 *Āryabhaṭīya Bhāṣya* p. 72 l. 10-17: athāsamaparidhīḥ kasmāt ucyate, na punah sphuṭaparidhir evocyate? evaṃ manyante: sa uḍḍaya eva nāsti yena sūkṣmaparidhir ṣānyate/ nanu cāyam asti: vikkhaṃbhavaggadasaṅkaraṇī vaṭṭassa paṇirao hodi (viśkambhavargadaśaṅkaraṇī vṛttasya parināḥo bhavati) iti/ atrāpi kevala evāgamah naivopapattīḥ/ ṛṇavijakṣamhasya daśa karanyaḥ paridhir iti/ atha manyate pratyaṣeṇaiva pramiṇyamāṇo rūṇavijakṣamhakṣetrasya paridhir daśa karanya iti/ naitat, aparībhāṣṭi pramāṇāṅvatā karaṇīḥ/ ekatvāviśāyāyatacaturāsrakṣetraṃ karaṇīṃ/ ekatvāviśāyāyatacaturāsrakṣetraṃ karaṇīṃ/ evaṃ pratiṣṭhāṇāḥ sat tatpramāṇo bhavatītī ceta tad api sādhyam eva/. For the use of karaṇī, see the reference in note 24 above. Note that Bhāskara's edited text has a number of grammatically incorrect occurrences of "karaṇika- and karaṇitva-; cp. Pāñ 7.4.14 na kapi.
[Question:] Isn't there the following saying: the circumference of a circle is the square root of 10 times the square of the diameter?\textsuperscript{787}

[Response:] Here too, [the claim] that the circumference of a diameter that equals one is the square root of 10 is mere tradition, and no demonstration (upapatti).

[Objection:] And if one thinks that the circumference, as directly (pratyakṣena) measured, of a [circular] area whose diameter equals one is the square root of 10,

[Response:] this is not [correct], for the measure of surds cannot be expressed.

[Objection:] If [it is maintained] that the circumference of [a circle] having that diameter (viz. one), surrounded by the diagonal of an oblong quadrilateral whose width and length are one and three [respectively], has the [same] size [as that diagonal],

[Response:] that, too, has to be established.

This passage is interesting for various reasons. For one thing, it uses the expression upapatti, which some translate ‘proof’, but for which ‘demonstration’ seems more appropriate. It also states quite unambiguously that "the measure of surds cannot be expressed [in fractions (?)]."\textsuperscript{788} But its special interest for us at present lies in the fact that it mentions, and accepts in principle, the idea of direct measurement as a method to reach conclusions of a geometrical nature. It even indicates how the square root of 10 can be measured, so as to compare its length with the circumference of a circle. It appears to be legitimate for Bhāskara to measure the circumference of a circle, presumably with a cord, and derive from this measurement what we would call the value of \( \pi \). All that he demurs to is the claim that the result of this measurement — in the case of a circle whose diameter is one — will be the square root of 10. This cannot be true, because the square root of 10, like other surds, cannot be expressed, presumably in terms of units or fractions.

It is hard to know what ‘demonstration’ would have convinced Bhāskara of the truth of the claim that \( \pi = \sqrt{10} \). But one thing is sure. The only other time he uses the term upapatti in this same commentary, it does not refer to anything comparable to what we would call a proof.\textsuperscript{789} The passage concerned occurs in the middle of a discussion of an example under Gaṇitapāda verse 6cd. Hayashi (1995: 75; modified) translates it as follows:\textsuperscript{790} “Drawing a plane figure in order to show the ground (upapatti) of the following Rule of Three”.

Bhāskara goes on criticizing the claim that \( \pi = \sqrt{10} \) at great length. Part of his criticism is interesting because it reveals that he appears to have extended the respect that he felt for the rules contained in the Āryabhaṭīya to other rules, which he perhaps found in other treatises. One way in which he tries to demonstrate the insufficiency of this value

\textsuperscript{787} The saying is in Prakrit and has obviously been borrowed from a Jaina text or context.

\textsuperscript{788} David Pingree (private communication) suggested "that Bhāskara’s problem was that no upapatti could verify that \( \pi = \sqrt{10} \) because of the difficulty of relating the square root of a surd to any previously verified theorem”.

\textsuperscript{789} Hayashi’s (1994: 123) following remark is therefore to be read with much caution: “The recognition of the importance of proofs dates back at least to the time of Bhāskara I ..., who, in his commentary on the Āryabhaṭīya, rejected the Jaina value of \( \pi, \sqrt{10} \), saying that it was only a tradition (āgama) and that there was no derivation of it.”

\textsuperscript{790} Āryabhaṭīya Bhāṣya p. 59 I. 3: ... ititrailāśikopapattipradarśanārthāṃ kṣetrayāsāḥ.
for \( \pi \) is by showing that it leads to totally unacceptable consequences. The following passage illustrates this:

And the calculation of an arc on the basis of the assumption that the measurement of a circumference is made with the square root of 10, is not always [possible].

For the śūtra for calculating an arc is [the following] half āryā verse:

*The sum of a quarter of the chord and half the sagitta, multiplied by itself, ten times that, the square root of that.*

[Consider] now the following example: In [a circle] whose diameter is fifty-two, the length of the sagitta is two.

With the help of the rule "ōgāhūnaṃ vikkhambham" one obtains as length of the chord: twenty (20). With this chord the calculation of the arc becomes: a quarter of the chord is 5, half the sagitta is 1, their sum is 6, multiplied by itself: 36, ten times that: 360, the square root of the arc is the arc.

The square of the whole chord is four hundred, the square of the arc three hundred sixty; how is that possible? The arc must [certainly] be longer than the chord. Here [on the other hand] the arc being thought out by [these] extremely clever thinkers has turned out to be shorter than the chord! For this reason, homage be paid to this root of 10, charming but not thought out.

This passage cites two rules, both of which Bhāskara calls śūtras. The second of these is "ōgāhūnaṃ vikkhambham", which had been cited in full, and illustrated, on the preceding page (p. 73 l. 2 ff.); it is in Prakrit and no doubt derives from a Jaina text. Contentwise this rule is no different from verse 17cd of the Gānita-pāda, studied above, and it is surprising that Bhāskara does not mind citing (and obviously accepts without questioning) the rule in the form in which it was used by the Jainas. The first śūtra cited in this passage, on the other hand, is in Sanskrit; it is not known where it comes from, but clearly it offers a calculation involving the square root of 10. Bhāskara uses this rule, and shows that it leads to an absurd outcome. Strictly speaking this may be due (i) to the particular value assigned to \( \pi \); (ii) to the form of the rule in general, quite apart from the value assigned to \( \pi \); or (iii) to both of these at the same time. Bhāskara triumphantly concludes that the fault lies with the square root of 10. A small calculation would have shown him that the approximate value of \( \pi \) that he, following Āryabhaṭa’s Gānita-pāda

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791 Āryabhaṭīya Bhāṣya p. 74 l. 9 - p. 75 l. 4: prṣṭhānayam api ca daśakaraṇiparidhihiprakṛtiyāparikalpanayā sadā na [bhavati/ yataḥ] prṣṭhānaye sūtram āryārdham: jyāpādaśaśārdhayatiḥ svagunā [daśasaṅgūṇā karanyas tāḥ] [atroddeśakāḥ: dvipaṇcāśadvikṣambhe dvir avagāhyā/]


792 The rule — which reads in full: oghaḥunam vikkhambham eghena songunam kuryā/ caigunasssa tu mālam jīvā savvakhattānam/ — is similar to Pādalipta’s Jyotiśkaraṇḍaka 191, which has: oghahunam vikkhambha mo tu oghasangunam kujjā/ catuhi gunitassa mūlam sā jīvā va tīha nātavvā/.
verse 10, does accept \((\pi = 3.1416)\), if used with the same but adjusted formula, leads to the same absurdity \((6 \times 3.1416 = 18.8496\) for the length of arc; \(20\) for the chord\). We must conclude that Bhāskara (unless he was confused) really criticized the formula, which may have occurred in a presumably Jaina treatise.\(^\text{793}\)

This allows us to draw some further conclusions. From a modern point of view Bhāskara might have criticized the wrong formula for calculating a length of arc by contrasting it with a correct one, along with a proof for the latter.\(^\text{794}\) He did not do so, most certainly because he did not have a correct formula, much less a proof for it.\(^\text{795}\) What is more, it is highly unlikely that he thought in terms of proofs of correct formulae. From his point of view the rules and theorems he had inherited were correct, the ones others had inherited were presumably mostly correct, but some of these led to unacceptable results, and were therefore incorrect.

The preceding reflections teach us the following. Judging by the evidence discussed so far, it is possible to maintain (as some have done) that Pāṇini’s grammar exerted an influence on classical Indian geometry. This would explain that both share a number of features. Two features in particular deserve mention:

1. Classical Indian geometry, like grammar, describes objects that exist in the material world, not abstractions. The practice of geometry does not therefore exclude the physical manipulation of such objects, and the search for generalizations based on concrete measurements. This explains that some conclusions — such as the not totally spherical shape of a sphere — may be based on reflections about or observations of material objects.

2. The objects of both classical Indian geometry and Sanskrit grammar are described with the help of rules that are as general as possible. In the case of geometry, the resulting rules look like Euclidean theorems, but unlike the latter, and like the rules of Pāṇini, they do not derive their validity from proofs. This explains that some incorrect rules have been able to slip into the works of Āryabhaṭa and Bhāskara and remain undiscovered for a long time.

Before we jump to the conclusion that these shared features are due to the influence of Pāṇini’s grammar on classical Indian geometry, some further facts and arguments have to be taken into consideration. The claimed absence of proofs in classical Indian geometry, in particular, has to be confronted with the conflicting claim that proofs existed already in Indian geometry long before Āryabhaṭa and Bhāskara, and presumably before Pāṇini,\(^\text{796}\) viz., in the geometry of the Vedic Śulbasūtras.\(^\text{797}\) Frits Staal — whose

\(^{793}\) Umāsvāti’s Tattvārthādhiyama Bhāṣya on sūtra 3.11 (I p. 258 l. 17-18) contains a different rule for the arc: \"The arc \((a)\) is the square root of six times the square of the sagitta \((s)\) plus the square of the chord \((c)\) \((a = \sqrt{6s^2 + c^2})\)\" (isuvargasya sadgunasya jyāvargyatasya mālam dhanuḥkāṣṭham); later authors (Mahāvīra, Āryabhaṭa II) accepted again different rules. See Datta 1929: 694, 699.

\(^{794}\) For the approximation proposed by Heron of Alexandria, see Heath 1921: II: 331.

\(^{795}\) He could hardly have such a formula in view of his conviction that \"there is a chord equal to the arc \[which it subtends\]\"; see above.

\(^{796}\) Michaels (1978: 56) points out that many terms related to the layering of the altar (the background of Vedic geometry) are known to Pāṇini. In a note he mentions, or refers to, īstakā, īstakacit, aṅgacit, āśādhā, aśvinī, vayasyā, etc.

\(^{797}\) Michaels’s (1978: 70 f.) attempts to show that the Śulbasūtras contain theoretical statements about ideal objects (\"theoretische Sätze über ideale Gegenstände\") have to be treated with caution.
views about the importance of grammar underlie some of the claims considered here — maintains this position in an article (1999), but does not provide arguments to bolster it beyond referring to a number of publications by Seidenberg (1978; 1983; one might add 1962; 1975: 289 f.) and Van der Waerden (1983: 26 ff.; one might add 1980). Seidenberg and Van der Waerden — like Staal himself — argue for a common origin of mathematics, or of geometry specifically, as found in various cultures. Staal, for example, pleads for a common origin of Greek and Vedic geometry in Bactria / Margiana; Van der Waerden proposes "a Neolithic Geometry and Algebra, invented somewhere in Central Europe between (say) 3500 and 2500 B.C., in which the ‘Theorem of Pythagoras’ played a central rôle" (1980: 29; cp. 1983: 33-35); Seidenberg claims to prove that "[a] common source for the Pythagorean and Vedic mathematics is to be sought either in the Vedic mathematics or in an older mathematics very much like it" (1978: 329; similarly already Schroeder 1884). More important for our present purposes is that, as pointed out above, these three authors agree that Vedic mathematics had proofs. Van der Waerden goes further and maintains that already the original mathematicians (whom he calls the pre-Babylonian mathematicians) had them (1980: 8): "I suppose that these mathematicians had proofs, or at least plausible derivations. A pupil who has to solve a mathematical problem can do it just by applying a rule he has learnt, but the man who invented the rule must have had some sort of derivation. I also suppose that our pre-Babylonian mathematicians had a proof of the ‘Theorem of Pythagoras’." Seidenberg is hardly less brazen (1978: 332): "The striking thing [in the Āpastamba Śulvasūtra] is that we have a proof. One will look in vain for such things in Old-Babylonia. The Old-Babylonians, or their predecessors, must have had proofs of their formulae, but one does not find them in Old-Babylonia."

The notion of proof that is claimed to have existed in India and elsewhere by the above-mentioned authors has been examined by G. E. R. Lloyd in the 3rd chapter of his

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in view of what we now know about classical Indian geometry (see above) and geometry in other cultures (see below). About the relationship between Śulbasūtras and classical Indian geometry, see Kaye 1919: 3 ("Les œuvres de la seconde période [= Āryabhaṭa etc.] ne font aucune allusion à un seul de ces sujets des Śulvasūtras") and the qualification added by Michaels (1978: 106: "Allerdings sind insbesondere angewiesen, dass einige Termini der [Śulbasūtras] in der jüngeren indischen Mathematik, wenn auch mit teilweise neuer Bedeutung fortleben, hier gewisse Einschränkungen zu erheben").

798 This does not withhold him from stating (Staal 1999: 113): "The only Indian counterpart to Euclid is the derivational system of Pāṇini’s Sanskrit grammar."

799 To the publications mentioned by Staal one might add Michaels 1978: 96 f., and the literature referred to on p. 97 n. 1.

800 Staal does not appear to address the question why in India — which purportedly had had both Pāṇinian grammar and Euclid-like geometry — only the former came to play an important role in science and philosophy. Note in this connection that Āryabhaṭiya Bhāṣya p. 13 l. 24 - p. 16 l. 24 contains a long discussion purporting to show the greater importance of the study of Jyotiṣa than that of grammar.

801 Reflections about the origin(s) of mathematics may have to take into consideration the extent to which mathematical activities were and are present outside the ‘higher’ cultures, in societies without writing. See in this connection Marcia Ascher’s book Ethnomathematics (1991); further Ascher 1994.

802 Cp. also Friberg 1990: 580: “There are reasons to believe that Babylonian mathematics in a decisive way influenced Egyptian, Greek, Indian and Chinese mathematics, in form as well as in content, during the last half of the -1st mill., if not earlier.”
book Demystifying Mentalities (1990), some passages of which are worth quoting. Lloyd begins as follows (p. 74):

At the outset we must be clear that ‘proof’ and ‘proving’ may signify a variety of more or less formal, more or less rigorous, procedures. In some domains, such as law, proving a fact or a point of law will be a matter of what convinces an audience as being beyond reasonable doubt. Again in some contexts, including in mathematics, ‘proving’ a result or a procedure will sometimes consist simply in testing and checking that it is correct. Both of these are quite informal operations. But to give a formal proof of a theorem or proposition requires at the very least that the procedure used be exact and of general validity, establishing by way of a general, deductive justification the truth of the theorem or proposition concerned. More strictly still Aristotle was to express the view that demonstration in the fullest sense depended not just on deductive (he thought specifically syllogistic) argument but also on clearly identified premises that themselves had to fulfil rather stringent conditions ... He was the first not just in Greece, but so far as we know anywhere, explicitly to define strict demonstration in that way.

Two crucial distinctions have, then, to be observed, (1) between formal proofs and informal ones, and (2) between the practice of proof (of whatever kind) and having an explicit concept corresponding to that practice, a concept that incorporates the conditions that need to be met for a proof to have been given.

Lloyd points out that the second distinction, in his view, has been ignored or badly underplayed in recent attempts to see the notion of proof as originating long before even the earliest extant Egyptian and Babylonian mathematics. He then turns to Vedic mathematics and argues that the authors of its key texts were not concerned with proving their results at all, but merely with the concrete problems of altar construction. Vedic mathematics is again dealt with in a "Supplementary note: geometry and 'proof' in Vedic ritual" (pp. 98-104), where Lloyd observes that "the notion that the authors in question had a clear and explicit concept of proof is subject to the general doubt ... that to obtain results is one thing, to have that concept as an explicit one is another. ... It also falls foul of one further fundamental difficulty. This is that no clear distinction is drawn in these texts between the rules that are expressed to arrive at what we should call approximations and those that are employed to yield what we should call exact results." (p. 101).

The question could be asked whether the notion of proof is really culture-specific to ancient Greece. Here Lloyd comments (p. 75):

The practice of proof, in Greece, antedates by several generations the first explicit formal definition (first given by Aristotle in the fourth century B.C.) and the process whereby such notions as that of the starting-points or axioms came to be clarified was both hesitant and gradual. That long and complex development, in Greece, belongs to and is a further instance of the gradual heightening of self-consciousness we have exemplified before, when second-order questions came to be raised concerning the nature, status, methods and foundations of different types of inquiry. None of the attendant circumstances surrounding these developments, and none of the steps by which the various interrelated key notions came to be
made explicit, can be paralleled in Vedic literature or in the evidence for Vedic society.\textsuperscript{803}

Does this mean that we should not expect any such notion to have existed in classical India? Is the notion of proof really a Greek invention, determined by the specific social and political situation prevailing in that culture? And does it follow that all cultures that do possess the notion of proof must have borrowed it — directly or indirectly — from ancient Greece?

Before trying to answer these questions it seems appropriate to recall that the absence of explicit proofs and of an identifiable notion of proof seems to be a common feature of many cultures that produced geometry. O. Neugebauer, for example, states about ancient Babylonia (1957: 45-46; cited in Seidenberg 1975: 286): "It must ... be underlined that we have not the faintest idea about anything amounting to a 'proof' concerning the relations between geometrical magnitudes,"\textsuperscript{804} Richard J. Gillings — in an appendix meant to counter some of the negative criticism addressed at the mathematics of the ancient Egyptians on account of its lack of formal proof — concludes nonetheless (1972: 234): "We have to accept the circumstance that the Egyptians did not think and reason as the Greeks did. If they found some exact method (however they may have discovered it), they did not ask themselves why it worked. They did not seek to establish its universal truth by an a priori symbolic argument that would show clearly and logically their thought processes."\textsuperscript{805} Chinese geometry, it appears, did not use proofs either.\textsuperscript{806}

\textsuperscript{803} Lloyd sums up his views on the development of proof in the following passages (pp. 95-96): "We can say that the development, in Greece, of the demand for certainty sprang in part from a dissatisfaction shared by a variety of individuals with the merely persuasive. ... We have related other intellectual developments that took place in early Greek thought ... to the political and social background, for example the extensive experience that many Greeks had of evaluating arguments in the law courts and assemblies. ... [W]e should conclude that [in the development of formal or rigorous proof] too ... the political and legal background plays a role at least at the beginning of what might otherwise seem a merely intellectual development. However, the qualification to the thesis that must be entered is that, in this instance, that role was not as a source of positive, but rather of negative, models."

\textsuperscript{804} Cp. Friberg 1990: 583: "it is clear that the Greek mathematicians completely transformed the intellectual goods they received [from Babylonian mathematics], ... Rigorous proofs based on abstract definitions and axioms took over the role played in Babylonian mathematics by a conceptually simpler method, that of using a reversal of the steps in an algorithm with given numerical data in order to check the computed values."

\textsuperscript{805} G. G. Joseph — in a chapter called "Egyptian and Babylonian mathematics: an assessment" — proposes to adjust the notion of proof so as to include these traditions (1991: 127): "A modern proof is a procedure, based on axiomatic deduction, which follows a chain of reasoning from the initial assumptions to the final conclusion. But is this not taking a highly restrictive view of what is proof? Could we not expand our definition to include, as suggested by Imre Lakatos ..., explanations, justifications and elaborations of a conjecture constantly subjected to counter-examples? Is it not possible for an argument or proof to be expressed in rhetoric rather than symbolic terms, and still be quite rigorous?" If one is determined to find proofs in all cultures that had geometry or something resembling it, adjusting the notion of proof may be the way to succeed; it is however open to doubt whether such a procedure adds much to our understanding.

\textsuperscript{806} On science and mathematics in Greece and China, see Nisbett 2003: 20-28.
When early in the seventeenth century Euclid’s *Elements* were translated into Chinese,\(^{807}\) by Matteo Ricci and Xu Guangqi, the latter of these two wrote (in the preface to another work) that only after the translation of Euclid’s *Elements* into Chinese had it become possible to transmit proofs and explanations. In fact, he maintained, the Western methods of conveying are not essentially different from the methods transmitted in earlier Chinese treatises. What makes Western mathematics more valuable is that it supplies explanations that show why the methods are correct.\(^{808}\) Joseph Needham (1959: 91) confirms this by stating: "In China there never developed a theoretical geometry independent of quantitative magnitude and relying for its proofs purely on axioms and postulates accepted as the basis of discussion." We learn from Jean-Claude Martzloff’s *A History of Chinese Mathematics* that in the Chinese tradition of geometry "the figures essentially refer not to idealities but to material objects which, when manipulated in an appropriate manner, effectively or in imagination, may be used to make certain mathematical properties visible".\(^{809}\) This has various consequences, among them the use of empirical methods: "To show that the side of a regular hexagon inscribed in a circle has the same length as the radius, six small equilateral triangles are assembled and the result is determined *de visu*. One proof technique for determination of the volume of the sphere involves weighing it."\(^{810}\) Sometimes "the reader is asked to put together jigsaw pieces, to look at a figure or to undertake calculations which themselves constitute the sole justification of the matter in hand". Martzloff concludes (p. 72): "If one has to speak of ‘proofs’, it might be said that, from this point of view, the whole of the mathematician’s art consists of making visible those mathematical phenomena which are apparent not in Platonic essences but in tangible things".\(^{811}\) The concern with mathematical objects as parts of objective reality reminds us of the similar concern on the part of Bhāskara, studied above.

Should we then conclude that the notion of proof belongs only to ancient Greece and its inheritors? I think the situation is more complex. Recall that India at the time of Āryabhaṭa and Bhāskara *did* have a clear notion of proof. Such a notion was present in

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\(^{807}\) It appears that a copy of a Chinese translation of the *Elements* was present in the imperial library at the end of the thirteenth century, but was ignored; see Needham 1959: 105 f. Huff (1993: 241; with a reference to Aydin Sayili, *The Observatory in Islam*, Ankara 1960, p. 189) adds: "Even more tantalizing are the reports that a Mongol ruler in China, Mangu (d. 1257 ...) is said to ‘have mastered difficult passages of Euclid by himself’. " In another publication, Huff (2011: 72 ff.) points out that Western astronomical knowledge and technology reached China in the 17\(^{th}\) century without having much of an effect; he speaks in this connection of a *curiosity deficit*.


\(^{810}\) Martzloff 1997: 72.

\(^{811}\) Note further Martzloff 1997: 276: "certain texts by Liu Hui [(end of third century CE)] and other mathematicians contain reasoning which, while it is not Euclidean, is no less well constructed and completely exact. Moreover, although they are not numerous, these arguments appear all the more salient because they are without peers in other non-Euclidean mathematical traditions. But they also enable us to understand that Chinese mathematics is in part based on a small number of heuristic operational methods of a geometrical type. ... In fact, the most striking thing is the concrete appearance of the Chinese approach or rather the fact that abstract results are accessed via ‘concrete’ means. Chinese proofs tend to be based on visual or manual illustration of certain relationships rather than on purely discursive logic."
Indian logic, which had been developing since long before Āryabhaṭa and reached great heights in the persons of Dignāga and Dharmakīrti precisely during the period that separates Āryabhaṭa from his commentator. Bhāskara at any rate, it would appear, could have been aware of the notion of proof, and had no excuse for not providing proofs for his theorems. At first sight the situation of these two mathematicians should not be very different from Euclid in Greece. Greek philosophers developed the notion of proof in their logic, and Greek mathematicians did the same in geometry. Indian philosophers developed the notion of proof in their logic, but the Indian mathematicians did not follow their example. Why not? The situation becomes even more enigmatic if we assume that Indian geometry derives from Greek geometry, and that therefore some Indian mathematicians (presumably well before Āryabhaṭa and Bhāskara) had been familiar with Euclidean procedures.

Recall here that Indian philosophers of the classical period were engaged in an ongoing debate among themselves, in which radically different positions were defended and criticized. This debate went on because all participants were part of a tradition of rational inquiry (see above), which translated itself in the social obligation — partly embodied in kings and their courts — to listen to one’s critics and defend one’s own point of view. This tradition of rational inquiry had an enormous impact on the shape and direction of Indian philosophy, but it is also clear that the development of logic in the different schools of philosophy was a result of this ongoing confrontation. Logic specified the rules that even one’s greatest enemy would have to accept.

Those who studied and practiced mathematics in India were not obliged to defend their positions against critical opponents to the same extent as their philosopher contemporaries. Not only were there no Buddhists to compete with, as we have seen, but apparently mathematics was not a topic about which public debates were organized. To quote Collins (1998: 551): "Organizationally, the mathematicians, astronomers, and medical doctors were based in private familistic lineages and guilds, never part of the sustained argument provided by philosophical networks. Public networks of argument did exist in India; its philosophical lineages reached high levels of abstract development. Only mathematics and science were not carried along with it." And the absence of a Buddhist contribution to, and participation in the development of astronomy and mathematics in classical India may be partly responsible for the relative ‘peace’ enjoyed by these branches of learning.  

There were differences of opinion, to be sure, but they were apparently not looked upon as particularly threatening. Bhāskara could show that the Jaina value for π, or rather their formula for calculating the length of arc that used this value, could not be correct. But apparently such disagreements were not yet considered sufficiently serious to rethink the whole system. Indeed we have seen that Bhāskara does not mind citing an apparently Jaina rule to justify a calculation. Indian astronomers and mathematicians, it

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812 Vogel (1997) shows that the Buddhists — or at least some of them — were not averse to following developments in astronomy to fix the dates of their Pusadha ceremony. The need to fix these dates did not apparently have the same effect as the Christian need to fix the date of Easter; about this latter need Duncan (1998: 79) states: "The history of science in the Middle Ages would have been very different if the bishops at Nicaea had decided to name a fixed date for Easter in the solar calendar"; further details in Heilbron 1999. Note that jyotisa / jyotis is mentioned in some lists of kalās occurring in Buddhist texts; see Franco 2000: 555 ([61]) with note 56.

813 A whole chapter of Brahmagupta's Brāhmaśputasiddhānta (no. 11: Tantraparikśā) is dedicated to the refutation of different opinions.
appears, were not engaged in ongoing debate with opponents belonging to different traditions, as were the philosophers.\footnote{For a recent example (from Jainism) of the close link between calendrical (i.e. astronomical) and sectarian concerns, see Cort 1999.} Nor were they — it seems — particularly interested in what was going on in philosophy. Randall Collins claims (1998: 551) that there are no recorded contacts between philosophical and mathematical networks, and that no individuals overlap both activities. This may not be entirely correct: David Pingree (private communication) mentions in this connection Nilakanṭha Somayājin’s Jyotirmīmāṃsā (written in 1504; cp. Pingree 1981: 50, 128); moreover, Venkatesvara Dīkṣīta, a late 16th century commentator, combined skills in Mīmāṃsā and mathematics (Pingree 1981: 6, 129).\footnote{He calls his teacher sarvanatrasvatāntra and sarveṣu tantreṣu samaṁ svatantraḥ, his father advaitavidyācārya (CESS 5 [1994], p. 735).} Yet Collins’s claim appears to hold true for Bhāskara (and perhaps other mathematicians of his time), judging by the list of authorities cited by him which is given at the end of the edition of his Āryabhaṭīya Bhāṣya (Shukla 1976: 345-346). Bhāskara often cites grammatical and generally linguistic texts,\footnote{See Appendix IX.} astronomical texts, some religious and literary treatises, but not a single philosophical work.\footnote{The one quotation from the Vākyapāḍīya (p. 22) concerns the meaning and function of upāya. Be it noted that Bhāskara’s commentary on Gītīkāpāda 1 enumerates the five buddhīndriyas, the five karmendriyas, plus manas, buddhi and ahāṅkāra, all of them known from Śāmkhya (p. 4 I. 11-15). Bhāskara also shows some acquaintance with Mīmāṃsā: p. 182 I. 8 sarvaśākhāpratrayam ekam karma may have been cited from Śabara’s Bhāṣya on Mīmāṃsāsūtra 2.4.9; the discussion immediately preceding this has a parallel in Śabara on 1.3.2.} It is true that we have very little information about the lives and circumstances of the early Indian mathematicians, but there is no reason that I know of to doubt their relative intellectual isolation,\footnote{Mathematics is most often presented in treatises of astronomy, and it seems likely that astronomers often earned their living as astrologers. Cp. Al-Bīrūnī (E. C. Sachau’s translation as reproduced in Chattopadhyaya 1992: 510): “If a man wants to gain the title of an astronomer, he must not only know scientific or mathematical astronomy, but also astrology.” Cp. Pingree 1981: 56 as cited in Yano 1987: 54 : ”There was never in India a jāti [caste, MY] of mathematicians, and rarely anything that could be called a school; most mathematicians were jyotisīs (astronomers or astrologers).” Pingree (1993: 77) argues that Āryabhata, far from making observations himself, derived the longitudes of the planets ”from astrological playing with numbers”.} combined perhaps with low social esteem.\footnote{On the low esteem in which astrologers were held, see Kane, HistDh V p. 526 f.} This situation barely changed in more recent centuries, so much so that John Taylor could write in 1816 (p. 37): “Within these two hundred years, however, the mathematical and astronomical sciences appear to have been gradually declining among the Hindus. The Jyotishis of the present day are in general profoundly ignorant of every branch of mathematics. Inattentive to astronomy as a science, they devote themselves solely to the study of astrology, and possess no ambition to arrive at a higher degree of knowledge than what enables them to cast up a nativity, or to determine a lucky hour for marriages, and for performing the numerous ceremonies practise by their countrymen.”

Some scholars are of the opinion that Indian mathematical authors more recent than Bhāskara did provide proofs for geometrical theorems. Takao Hayashi, for example, remarks (1995: 75): “the term upapatti stands for the proof or derivation of a mathematical formula. We find a number of instances of upapatti used in that sense in later commentaries such as Gaṇeśa’s Buddhivilāsini (A.D. 1545) on the Līlāvati and
Krṣṇa's *Navāṅkura* (ca. A.D. 1600) on the *Bījaganita.* M. D. Srinivas (1990) gives a list of commentaries that contain mathematical *upapattis* in an appendix (no. I; p. 57 f.) to his article; all of them date from the 16th and 17th centuries. The highly interesting question to what extent these later mathematical authors had an explicit concept of proof (not necessarily Euclidean; cp. Lloyd's remarks above) and, if so, when, how and why such a concept made its appearance in Indian mathematical works, cannot be addressed here. One may wonder whether the type of arguing that had become common in philosophical debate slowly found its way into this area of knowledge. But whether or not such a shift of attitude took place in mathematics, there seems to be no doubt that Bhāskara I, the commentator whose work we are considering, was not (yet) affected by it.

The following example confirms this. The *Āryabhaṭīya Bhāsya* contains the following diagram "to convince the dull-witted".820

**Fig. 3**

Fig. 3: There is a square corresponding to AC²

Bhāskara uses this diagram to show that the square of a diagonal of a rectangular surface does indeed correspond to a geometric square: AC² (= AB² + BC²) corresponds to the surface ACDE. However, this same diagram could easily be used, and has been used by more recent authors, to prove the Pythagorean theorem (though not, of course, in a ‘Euclidean’ manner). In this case, as Keller (2006: II: 6) points out, the area of the interior small square (whose sides are equal to b - a) increased by the area of the four triangles (whose sides are a and b), gives the area of the big square whose sides are the hypotenuse of the four triangles (in other words: \( c^2 = (b - a)^2 + 4 \times ab/2 = a^2 + b^2 \)). This proof is given by the author Gaṇeśa Daivajña in around 1545 (Srinivas 1990: 39) and, it is claimed, by Bhāskara II around 1150.821 Bhāskara I had this proof of the Pythagorean theorem so to say under his nose, but he was apparently not interested.

What can we conclude from all this? Reviel Netz observes (1999: 216): "One of the most impressive features of Greek mathematics is its being practically mistake-free. An inspectable product in a society keen on criticism would tend to be well tested." The same cannot be said about Indian mathematics. In spite of all the qualifications that have been considered above, we cannot but conclude that Indian society — or at any rate the society of Indian mathematicians at the time of Bhāskara I — was not keen on criticism, and was not in the habit of testing its mathematical products. Indeed, it may not be possible to speak of Indian society as something homogeneous at all at that time. Brahmins had successfully separated themselves from the rest of society, and even within the Brahmanical caste-class hierarchical divisions were omnipresent, as we saw in Part 1 822 *Homo hierarchicus* does not constitute a society that, as a whole, is ‘keen on criticism’. Out of sheer necessity some degree of criticism found its way into one sub-

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820 *Āryabhaṭīya Bhāsya* p. 48 l. 16 f. The edition of K. S. Shukla contains a somewhat different diagram; however, a manuscript page reproduced by Keller’s (2006: II: 3) appears to support this construction.


822 *Buddhism in the Shadow of Brahmanism* § 3.2 (*Science and religion in classical India*; esp. p. 116 f.) draws attention to the disrespect held by other Brahmins with respect to practitioners of astrology/astroonomy/mathematics.
layer, that of the philosophers. Since it did not respond to a deeper need, it did not spread from there, not even to those, such as mathematicians, who might have profited from it.

III.3. Patañjali’s reinterpretation of Grammar

In order to assess the influence that early Buddhist philosophy exerted on Patañjali, it is necessary first to present in brief what this early Buddhist philosophy looked like, especially in the areas that were going to influence the grammarian.

III.3.1. Earliest Buddhist systematic philosophy

It seems likely that the strong Hellenistic presence in northwest India is one of the factors that forced the Buddhists of this part of the subcontinent to rethink their Buddhist heritage, as a result of which they recreated it from within. They reinterpreted many elements of Buddhist teaching and the result was what appears to be the first systematic philosophy in the Indian subcontinent.\textsuperscript{823} This philosophy had little in common with Buddhist thought as it had existed until then and as it continued to exist especially outside the subcontinent (most notably in Sri Lanka). Briefly, the new philosophy held that the world of our experience is not really what it looks like. It is constituted of countless numbers of minute elements of existence, called dharmas. This philosophy can be called atomic, on condition that one keeps in mind that the Buddhist dharmas are not all material and are in many respects different from atoms as we may conceive of them in the modern world. These dharmas were not only believed to be exceedingly small, they were also exceedingly short-lived. Dharmas, in fact, are momentary: they disappear the moment after they come into existence.\textsuperscript{824} Moreover, the successions of momentary dharmas are steered by a strict rule, the law of conditioned origination (\textit{pratītyasamutpāda}); this law stipulates that the appearance of each new dharma is conditioned by the immediately preceding one, never by earlier ones, nor indeed by the anticipation of succeeding ones.

This last feature of causality as conceived of by the scholiasts of northwest India confronted them with a number of difficulties, and they took great pains to solve them. If only the immediately preceding stage of a causal sequence determines the immediately following one, certain causal sequences become difficult to understand. There should be no gaps in the sequences of dharmas, because there would be no way to bridge those gaps. However, according to Buddhist thinking, certain meditative states by their very nature interrupt the mental processes into which they are inserted. Some of these states imply the suppression of all mental activity and of consciousness itself; the term frequently used is \textit{nirodha}. When a meditator arises out of such a state, the first moment of renewed consciousness does not succeed any immediately preceding mental dharma. Given the way the Buddhists now conceived of causal processes, mental states such as \textit{nirodha} should not be able to exist.

\textsuperscript{823} For details, see Bronkhorst 2009: chapter 2 (“Arranging the doctrine”).

\textsuperscript{824} On the beginning of Buddhist momentariness, see Rospatt 1995, along with Bronkhorst 1995.
But causality conceived of in this manner has no place for teleology either: a causal sequence conceived in this manner cannot be guided by any future goal. This made it very difficult for these Buddhist thinkers to account for karmic retribution. Karmic retribution is, of course, a causal process, but not a blind one. It ‘aims at’ retribution, and is therefore presumably guided by the intended outcome of the process. This, however, should be excluded by the very way in which causal processes were thought of.

Buddhist thinkers took these difficulties seriously, and came up with various solutions. The Sarvāstivāda Buddhists made the claim — a claim that is responsible for their name — that past dharmas exist beside present and future dharmas, so that a past dharma can exert a direct influence on future dharmas. Most other Buddhists did not accept this counter-intuitive position. The Sautrāntikas, for example, proposed another solution: sequences of seeds (bīja) connect the deed with its effect. In the case of the meditational state of nirodha, the last moment before the suppression of consciousness is connected through this sequence with the first conscious moment after it. Again other Buddhists, particularly the Yogācāras, introduced the notion of ālayavijñāna, one of whose functions was, once again, to account for the gaps in continuity in the causal chains of dharmas. It is not necessary to deal with all these solutions in detail. They do show, however, how seriously the Buddhists took their vision of causal chains in which each following element is exclusively determined by the immediately preceding one.

The northwestern Buddhists took one further step. They maintained, as they had to, that the dharmas really exist, but added that dharmas are the only things that really exist. Objects that are constituted of dharmas — i.e., everything we come across in our daily experience — do not really exist. By taking this further step, these Buddhists ended up believing that the world of our ordinary experience is not real, that there is a reality hiding behind it that is not evident to ordinary experience.

If the world of our ordinary experience does not really exist, how then are we misled into believing that it does? A frequent answer to this question is: the objects of our experience, whether they be chariots, houses, persons or whatever else, are in reality nothing but names. We are ultimately misled by our language. This answer appears in the Questions of Milinda (Milindapañha), a text whose title associates it with the Indo-Greek ruler Menander who ruled around 150 BCE. In the beginning of the second book (Lakkanapañha) (p. 25 f.) we find the famous observation that a chariot is nothing but a word. But already a canonical passage (the only one, and therefore not necessarily old) states that "just as the word ‘chariot’ is used when the parts are put together, so there is the use of the conventional expression ‘being’ when the constituents of a person are

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825 Real or apparent goal-oriented processes constitute a challenge for modern science and philosophy, too. For two altogether different attempts to deal with it, see Deacon 2012 and Nagel 2012.

826 Schmithausen 1987; further Bronkhorst 2000a: ch. 10 and 11; 2009: 95 f., 108 f.

827 See Grainger 2013: 64-76 (“The sack of Pataliputra”).

present”. Other Buddhist texts state the same in different words. A hut, we read in the Šāriputraśīla, is nothing but a designation. The Mahāvibhāṣā illustrates the category of nominal existence (prajñātisat) by enumerating the objects "pot, cloth, chariot, army, forest, hut etc." The Abhidharmakośabhāṣya explains that a composite object is prajñātisat, not dravyasat. It became the basis for their language philosophy.

One more question must be dealt with here. If only dharmas exist, and spatially and temporally composite objects do not, one might think that words (and other linguistic units, such as sentences and speech sounds) do not exist either. After all, from the point of view of the Buddhist scholiasts, the position of words was not all that different from pots and chariots: all of them were no more than successions of dharmas, and one might think that the ultimate non-existence of words was no more disturbing than the ultimate non-existence of chariots. For reasons that we can only guess, the Buddhist scholiasts of the Sarvāstivāda school were of a different opinion. Perhaps they thought that the non-existence of words implied the non-existence of the Buddha-word, which would deprive the Buddhist tradition of its most valuable asset. But whatever the reason for their concern, the result is visible in their texts. The Buddhist scholiasts posited the existence of words and other linguistic units. This they did in the only way open to them, viz., by stating that words and other linguistic units are dharmas. They postulated the existence of three such dharmas: the ‘body-of-word’ (nāmakāya), the ‘body-of-sentence’ (padakāya), and the ‘body-of-sound’ (vyāñjanakāya). These dharmas are already enumerated in the lists of so-called cittaviprayukta samskāras in several canonical Abhidharm texts of the Sarvāstivāda: in the Dhammadhāna (TI 1537, vol. 26, p. 500c, l. 22, cf. p. 501b, l. 21), the Prakaraṇapāda (TI 1541, vol. 26, p. 628c, l. 23-24, p. 634c, l. 19-20; TI 1542, vol. 26, p. 694a, l. 28-29, p. 699b, l. 23) and the Jñānaprasthāna (TI 1543, vol. 26, p. 774b, l. 5-15; TI 1544, vol. 26, p. 920b, l. 15-25). The first chapter of the Prakaraṇapāda is also known as a separate work called Pañcavastuka; here too we find the ‘linguistic dharmas’ enumerated and explained (TI 1556, vol. 28, p. 997c, l. 27-29; TI 1557, vol. 28, p. 998c, l. 25, p. 1001a, l. 28-29; Imanishi 1969: 8). They are of course a regular feature of later Sarvāstivāda and related works.

829 SN I.135: yathā hi aṅgasambhārā hoti saddo ratro iti/ evam khandesu santesu hoti satto ti sammutti./
830 TI 1548, vol. 28, p. 626c l. 11-12.
831 TI 1545, vol. 27, p. 42b l. 1-2. Cp. the following statements from the same text, translated by La Vallée-Poussin (1937a: 166-67): ”Le Bhadanta Vasumitra dit: ‘Le nom qui désigne est samvṛtī ...’", ”Bhadanta dit: ‘Parler d’être vivant (sattva), de cruche, de vêtement et autres choses, expressions (vyavahāra) produites par une pensée non-fausse, c’est samvṛtisatya; ...’"; ”Le Bhadanta Dharadatta dit: ‘Le nom, de sa nature (nāmasvabhāva), est samvṛti; ...’” Also the Vibhāṣā refers to the principle ”Toutes choses sont vides et sans-soi”; see La Vallée-Poussin 1937: 164.
832 Abhidh-k-bh(P) p. 13 l. 24-25, on verse 1.20: yadi rāṣṭrayathā skandhārthaḥ prajñātisantah skandhāḥ prāṇapunvantāt anekeśvarasamāhāvatāt rāṣṭrapudgalavat/
833 It is not impossible that the Pañcavastu was an earlier work which was later incorporated into the Prakaraṇapāda.
834 See, e.g., Ghosakā’s Amṛtarasa (TI 1553, vol. 28, p. 979c, l. 13-14), Dharmāśri’s Abhidharmaḥrdaya (TI 1550, vol. 28, p. 831a, l. 2-4), Upaśānta’s Abhidharmaḥrdaya (TI 1551, vol. 28, p. 866a, l. 14-17), Dharmaratā’s Saṃyuktābhidharmāḥrdaya (TI 1552, vol. 28, p. 943a, l. 25-28), Skandhila’s Abhidharmāvatāra (TI 1554, vol. 28, p. 982a, l. 5, p. 987c, l. 23 - p. 988a, l. 11), Vasubandhu’s Abhidharmaḥkośa and -bhāṣya 2.47 (p. 80 f.; La Vallée-Poussin 1923-31: ch. II, p. 238 f.), etc.
The precise interpretation of the terms nāmakāya, padakāya and vyañjanakāya varies in the later texts. For our present purposes it is not necessary to study this in detail. One peculiarity of the later interpretations may however be noted: the word pada in padakāya has come to be interpreted to mean ‘sentence’ or ‘verse foot’. Stcherbatsky (1922: 24 n. 1) considered this "a case exhibiting clearly the desire to have a terminology of its own". Jaini (1959: 98 ff.) on the other hand thought that this unusual meaning of the term pada can be traced to Pali. He supports this with an example from the Samyutta Nikāya,⁸³⁵ which however does not carry much conviction; there is no reason to doubt that pada in this passage simply means 'word'.⁸³⁶

There is no need to show that pada in Buddhism always meant ‘sentence’ or ‘verse foot’: it did not always have that meaning in the compound padakāya. In the Prakaranaṇapāda — the earliest text which explains the term padakāya — pada means ‘word’. Padakāya is here explained as "a whole of speech sounds" (TI 1541, vol. 26, p. 628c, l. 24; TI 1542, vol. 26, p. 694a, l. 28-29; TI 1556, vol. 28, p. 997c, l. 28). This interpretation of pada is more natural and therefore more satisfactory than ‘sentence’ or ‘verse foot’. It leaves us however with the problem why this word acquired a different meaning later. One would be tempted to think that nāmakāya and padakāya were at one time synonyms. This, of course, would entail that there was a time when there were not three, but only two linguistic dharmas.

There is some evidence to support this. Before we turn to it, it will be necessary to say something about the Sarvāstivāda canonical Abhidharma texts. These texts, or at least some of them, have not been preserved in the forms in which they were written. The Dharmaṇḍakaṇḍha, for example, is rather the end-product of a development. Frauwallner (1964: 73-80 [1995: 15-21]; 1971: 103 f. [1995: 39 f.]) has adduced reasons to think that both the Sarvāstivāda Dharmaṇḍakaṇḍha and the Pali Abhidhamma Vibhaṅga developed out of a common original text. The details of this development are not known to us, nor do we know when exactly this development came to an end. We only know that the end products of these two developments — the Dharmaṇḍakaṇḍha and the Vibhaṅga — differ greatly from each other.

In the case of the Dhātukāya some insight into the history of the text is made possible by its relationship to the Pali Dhātukathā on the one hand, and to the fact that this text, possibly in adjusted form, has been included in the fourth chapter of the Prakaranaṇapāda on the other. Frauwallner (1964: 85 f. [1995: 26 f.]), who also studied this question, came to the conclusion that a part of the Dhātukāya developed beyond the stage embodied in the fourth chapter of the Prakaranaṇapāda, while another part is further developed in the fourth chapter of the Prakaranaṇapāda. We see that adjustments and emendations were still added in relatively recent times.

The researches of Yukio Sakamoto (1935) take us to even more recent dates. Sakamoto compared the quotations from the Prakaranaṇapāda in the Mahāvibhāṣā with the readings in the Prakaranaṇapāda itself, and came to the conclusion that the Prakaranaṇapāda still underwent changes after the compilation of the Mahāvibhāṣā!

It becomes evident from the above that most, perhaps all, of the Chinese translations of Abhidharma works which we possess are translations of emended, and therefore non-original, texts. In order to penetrate as far as possible to the earliest form of

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⁸³⁵ SN II.36: ekena padena sabbo attho vutto.
⁸³⁶ Viz., the word phassa which figures prominently in the preceding discussions.
a certain idea, we must therefore not just use early texts, but where possible early translations as well.

The two Chinese translations of the *Prakaranapāda* that we possess were both made after the time when emendations were introduced into the text, and the same is true of one of the two Chinese translations of the *Pañcavastu*, its separate first chapter. The other translation of the *Pañcavastu*, however, is old and may have been made by An Shigao, the first translator of whom we know. It may therefore date back to the second century CE. What does this old translation tell us about the number of linguistic dharmas?

The oldest translation of the *Pañcavastu*, which is probably the oldest translation we possess of any Abhidharma work into Chinese, knows only two linguistic dharmas! The clumsiness of this translation makes it hard to determine which two Sanskrit terms were here being translated. The first one reads in Chinese *ming tzu*, which may stand for *nāmakāya* or *padakāya*. I shall use the term *padakāya* for convenience' sake, not because I have any reason to think that this term rather than *nāmakāya* was used. The second term reads *chüeh* in Chinese, which literally means ‘cut’ or ‘break’. This translation was apparently chosen to represent the constituent portions of a word, i.e., the *vyāñjana* or rather the *vyāñjana-kāya*.

This same old translation of the *Pañcavastu* explains the term *vyāñjana-kāya* with the words: *tzu wei chüi*. This can be translated as "sound as a totality". This seems to indicate that *vyāñjana-kāya* was not considered a Tatpurusa compound but rather a Karmadhāraya. We saw above that the old meaning of *padakāya* was, similarly, a collection of speech sounds, therefore ‘word’ rather than ‘collection of words’. We may conclude that *vyāñjana-kāya* and *padakāya* (or was it *nāmakāya*?) initially named single sounds and single words respectively, both conceived of as single, indivisible entities.

The early Buddhist scholiasts from northwestern India, then, introduced two or three linguistic dharmas. We will see that in so doing they introduced a notion that was to have a long history in India.

III.3.2. Buddhist influence on Patañjali

Kashmir (where we believe Patañjali lived; see § I.2.1, above) is near Gandhāra, and is sometimes considered part of Greater Gandhāra. Like Gandhāra, it had a strong Buddhist presence, and it is more than likely that the Buddhist doctors of Kashmir participated in the intellectual revolution that we have described above. Unlike Gandhāra, Kashmir was conquered by Puṣyamitra after the collapse of the Maurya Empire, and

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837 For details see Imanishi 1969: 4.
838 So Demiéville 1953: 446.
839 See TI 1557, vol. 28, p. 1001a, l. 25 f. Prof. E. Zürcher confirmed this conclusion in a private communication.
840 Interestingly, and in spite of its success in Brahmanical circles, later Buddhists came to reject this in origin Buddhist notion, among them Dharmakīrti; see Eltschinger 2007: 157 ff.
841 The map given by Salomon (1999: 2) suggests that he includes Kashmir in ‘Greater Gandhāra’ (see also Dietz 2007: 50); Behrendt (2004: 16, 22) does so explicitly. David Gordon White (2012) adds Bactria, so as to arrive at a cultural area he calls KGB.
Patañjali indicates that he once worked for this ruler, presumably as a sacrificial priest.\textsuperscript{842} Pusyamitra is reported, already in the early \textit{Vibhāṣā}, to have treated local Buddhists harshly.\textsuperscript{843} Buddhism did not disappear from Kashmir as a result; it continued to flourish there for a number of centuries. In other words, it is possible or even likely, not just that Patañjali got into contact with Buddhists, but that he had occasion to become acquainted with the new philosophical developments in their religion.

There are various reasons to think that while writing his \textit{Great Commentary} Patañjali was indeed acquainted with Buddhism.\textsuperscript{844} This acquaintance manifests itself in his approach to Grammar, and to language in general. We will study examples below. It also finds expression in some relativement minor features, which we will consider first. Among these we notice the following.\textsuperscript{845} The \textit{Mahābhāṣya} cites the following proverb: \textit{āmrān prṣṭah kovidrān ācaṣte} “Being questioned about mangoes he acquaints [one] with the \textit{kovidāra} (trees)”. A similar proverb is known from Buddhist literature.

A second reason is as follows. Patañjali’s \textit{Mahābhāṣya} on P. 1.3.1 mentions "sciences which have something auspicious in the beginning, in the middle and in the end" (\textit{maṅgalādīnī maṅgalamadhyāni maṅgalāntānī sāstrāṇī}). The \textit{Mahābhāṣya} itself is not stated to have something auspicious in the beginning, in the middle and in the end. In the case of the \textit{vārttikas}, the "something auspicious in the beginning" is, according to Patañjali, the use of the word \textit{siddhe} in one of the first of them. But this \textit{vārttika} does not appear to be the first \textit{vārttika} in the \textit{Mahābhāṣya}, as I have argued elsewhere.\textsuperscript{846} The "something auspicious in the beginning" in \textit{Pāṇini’s Asṭādhyāyī} is the word \textit{vṛddhi} in P. 1.1.1 (\textit{vṛddhir ād aic}). The "something auspicious in the middle" in this text is the presence of \textit{bhū-} (instead of \textit{bhv-}) in P. 1.3.1 (\textit{bhūvādayo dhātavaḥ}); P. 1.3.1 is not, of course, anywhere near the middle of the \textit{Asṭādhyāyī}. The "something auspicious in the end" remains unspecified. Some commentators propose the use of \textit{udaya} in P. 8.4.67, which is not the very end of the \textit{Asṭādhyāyī}. It is far from certain that Patañjali had anything specific in mind for the "something auspicious in the end". The question is therefore: whence did Patañjali get the notion of "sciences which have something auspicious in the beginning, in the middle and in the end"?

The answer that suggests itself is simple and straightforward. We find the same notion in a number of Buddhist texts. The Dharma, i.e. the truth preached by the Buddha, is there described as "auspicious in the beginning, in the middle and in the end", in \textit{Pāli}: \textit{ādikalyāṇa, majhekalayāṇa, pariyosanakalyāṇa}, in Sanskrit: \textit{ādua kalyāṇa, madhye kalyāṇa, paryavasāne kalyāṇa}. We find this expression very frequently in the \textit{Pāli} Buddhist texts, esp. in the \textit{Vinaya} and \textit{Sutta Piṭakas}.\textsuperscript{847} The expression has been preserved in Sanskrit in the \textit{Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra}, the \textit{Daśottarasūtra}, the \textit{Nidānasamyuktā}, and

\textsuperscript{842} Mahā-bh II p. 123 I. 3-4 (on P. 3.2.123 vt. 1): \textit{iha puṣyamitraṁ yājayāmaḥ}. “[Patañjali] speaks about Pusyamitra in the present tense, as if he was his own king.” (Witzel 2006: 478)

\textsuperscript{843} Lamotte 1958: 424 ff.

\textsuperscript{844} Gornall (2013) explores the “possibility that [Patañjali] was influenced by the views of a heterodox Sarvāstivādin monk, Dharmatrāta” (p. 204).

\textsuperscript{845} For details, see Bronkhorst 1995a; 2002c.

\textsuperscript{846} Bronkhorst 1987a, part I.

\textsuperscript{847} See the \textit{Pāli Tipiṭakaṁ Concordance}, part VI, p. 316, s.v. \textit{ādikalyāṇa}, for references to the \textit{Pāli} canon.
elsewhere.\(^{848}\) Several of these texts in Sanskrit belonged most probably to the Sarvāstivādins.\(^{849}\)

The third reason to be discussed requires more explanation. The Mahābhāṣya under P. 3.2.115 contains the following sentences:\(^{850}\) "Alternatively, there are people who do not perceive the present. For example: Śākapāyana from among the grammarians, while sitting at [the side of] the carriage-road, did not perceive a group of carts that passed by."

Buddhist literature contains a similar episode in the Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra and its parallels. Here a certain Ārāda Kālāma is stated to have had such an experience, or rather non-experience. He described the event in the following words:\(^{851}\) "Even though conscious and awake I did not hear the sound of five hundred carts passing by."

It is of course tempting to assume that Patañjali was acquainted with the Sarvāstivāda Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra. This alone might then be held to account both for his story about Śākaṭāyana and for his mention of "sciences which have something auspicious in the beginning, in the middle and in the end". This conclusion should not, however, be drawn rashly. The story of Śākaṭāyana in particular has some aspects that might be held to plead against direct borrowing from the Buddhist Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra. It is not impossible that the story of Ārāda Kālāma is not a Buddhist invention. Ārāda Kālāma is presented as a non-Buddhist teacher, and this may very well be correct. It is therefore conceivable that similar stories were current in non-Buddhist circles, and Patañjali may therefore have heard some such story from non-Buddhists.

The name Śākaṭāyana poses another problem. It means "descendant of Śakaṭa" (by P. 4.1.99). But śakaṭa is also the word for ‘cart’ used in Patañjali’s remark. This may not be coincidence. A more or less floating story about carts may have been attributed to Śākaṭāyana because of his name. If that is true, it is harder to believe that Patañjali was influenced here by the episode about Ārāda Kālāma in the Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra. Unless, of course, we assume that Patañjali (or someone else) made up the story about Śākaṭāyana under the influence of the Buddhist texts with which he supposedly was acquainted.\(^{852}\)

Regarding possible Buddhist influence on Patañjali, perhaps the following point can be added to the above: the Mahābhāṣya (under P. 1.2.52 vt. 4) mentions mount Khalatika, a mountain that is also mentioned in a Buddhist inscription from Kanaganahalli (underneath a scene in which the Buddha figures); Khalatika is the name

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\(^{849}\) Hinüber 1985: 69-70, 71-73 (Nidānasamyukta; Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra); Pāśadika 1985: 185, with reference to an article by J. W. de Jong (Daśottarasūtra)

\(^{850}\) Mahā bh II p. 120, l. 20-23: athavā bhavati vai kaścid api vartamānakalām nopalabhate/ tad yathā/ vaiyākaraṇāṇām śākaṭāyano ramathārge āśīnaḥ śaκaṭasārtham yāntaṃ nopalebhe/

\(^{851}\) MPS 28.18: samjñā evaḥ... samāna jāgraṇā nāśraśaṁ pañcāṇām śaṭāsaṭānāṁ vyaitkramamāṇānāṁ śādabhe/

\(^{852}\) Black (2011) suggests "that the Upaniṣads and the Ambaṭṭha Sutta of the Digha Nikāya ... convey two versions of the same story, with the literary characters Śvetaṅkata and Ambaṭṭha sharing some striking similarities" (p. 137). He specifies, however: "merely because this story probably appeared in the Upaniṣads before it appeared in Buddhist literature does not necessarily mean that it was originally a Brahmanical tale." (p. 149)
of the hill where Asoka donated caves to the Ājīvikas according to an accompanying inscription.853

Mention may further be made of Beckwith’s recent (2012) theory about the recursive argument method. This method, he claims, is for the first time recognizable in certain northwestern Abhidharma texts — first the Aṣṭāgrantha (or Aṣṭaskandha), then the Vibhāṣa — before it affected other texts, both east and west (ultimately affecting medieval Europe). It might be argued that Patañjali’s Mahābhāṣya displays this same feature, being composed “in the form of dialogues in which take part a student (śisya) who questions the purpose … of rules and their formulations, an unaccomplished teacher (ācāryadesāya) who suggests solutions which are not fully acceptable, and a teacher (ācārya) who states what is the finally acceptable view” (Cardona 1976: 253). This might then be construed to indicate that Patañjali underwent the influence of northwestern Abhidharma.854

Direct influence of Buddhist philosophy on Patañjali is suggested by the following: Patañjali uses these two expressions: guṇasāṇḍrāvo dravyam (Mahā-bh II p. 366 l. 26, on P. 5.1.119 vt. 5) and guṇasamudāyo dravyam (Mahā-bh II p. 200 l. 13-14).855 Both state that material objects are collections of qualities; the context makes clear that the qualities concerned are sound (śabda), touch (sparśa), colour (rūpa), taste (rasa) and smell (gandha). There is no reason to believe that Patañjali himself accepted this position, yet its very mention proves that there were thinkers at the time of Patañjali who did. Who were they?

The Sāmkhya philosophy is known to have accepted the position that material objects are collections of qualities during part of its history (Bronkhorst 1994a). There is however no reason to think that Sāmkhya as a developed philosophy existed already at the time of Patañjali, because his Mahābhāṣya contains no clear indication that he was acquainted with this school of thought. But Sāmkhya was not the only philosophy that accepted this position. Buddhist Sarvāstivāda accepted it well before Sāmkhya (see Bronkhorst 2009: 101-102). Patañjali’s remarks are most easily explained by the assumption that he was directly or indirectly acquainted with Sarvāstivāda Buddhism.

**Patañjali on words and speech sounds**

Buddhism also appears to have exerted an influence on Patañjali’s linguistic thought. Some of the innovations that Patañjali introduced into the Pāṇinian grammatical tradition are most easily explained by the assumption of Buddhist scholastic influence.

One of these is Patañjali’s tendency to look upon words and speech sounds as independently existing entities. This betrays ontological concerns, concerns that Patañjali did not share with his grammatical predecessors. Ontological concerns were, on the other hand, at the very heart of the philosophical reflections of Patañjali’s Buddhists contemporaries who were also, as we have come to think, his direct neighbours. Ontologically speaking, Patañjali realized, words and speech sounds constitute a problem, because they are sequences of elements that do not occur simultaneously. The sounds of the word ‘cow’ have to be pronounced in sequence, not simultaneously, to be

854 See further Bronkhorst forthcoming b.
855 Already Albrecht Wezler (1985) drew attention to these expressions.
understood. At no single moment, therefore, is there something one might call “the word ‘cow’”. The Buddhists, we know, had denied this, and claimed that there is a word ‘cow’: it is a dharma, and as such it is momentary, and exists quite independently of the constituent speech sounds. They made similar claims with regard to speech sounds and sentences.

Patañjali repeats their claim, be it with certain modifications. He, too, accepts the existence of words and sounds beside and independently of their constituent elements. He does not, of course, call these dhemas, nor does he accept that they are momentary. On the contrary, he considers these independent entities to be eternal.856 “Words are eternal, and in eternal words there must be speech sounds that are lasting, unchangeable, not subject to loss, additions or modifications.”857 Patañjali does not present this claim as something new; he behaves rather as if his predecessors had always ‘known’ that Sanskrit was eternal, and therefore without beginning in time. In fact, he interprets a short statement (a vārttika) from his predecessor Kātyāyana in such a manner that it supports his own position as to the eternity of words.858

Let us now consider in further detail what Patañjali says about the ontological status of words and sounds.

In 1960 Erich Frauwallner published a short article about the infiltration of linguistic theory into the Indian philosophical systems (“Das Eindringen der Sprachtheorie in die indischen philosophischen Systeme”).859 Frauwallner argued that ideas about the nature of the word entered from grammar into the Brahmanical systems. In this context he mentioned Mīmāṃsā in particular. This system looks upon the constituent speech sounds of words as being eternal, but denies the existence of a whole word different from the sounds. The eternity of speech sounds supposedly proves the eternity of the Veda. This, Frauwallner points out, is odd. Frauwallner tries to explain the difficulty with the help of the influence of Vaiśeṣika ideas on Mīmāṃsā. The idea of the sound as an eternal entity, he states, was borrowed from the grammarians. The grammarians, however, also accepted the word as an eternal entity. Philosophical ideas borrowed from Vaiśeṣika, on the other hand, left no space for words as independent entities. As a result Mīmāṃsā accepted only speech sounds as independent and eternal entities.

Frauwallner was aware of the chronological implications of this view. It means that the doctrine of eternal sounds is relatively recent in Mīmāṃsā. And indeed, Frauwallner can adduce arguments that support the view that the Mīmāṃsā sūtras (Mīmsū 1.1.6-23) in which this view is defended are a later insertion into the Sūtra text. If we remove these sūtras the remainder fits well together. Sūtra 1.1.5 establishes that the connection between word and meaning is natural (autpattika). Sūtra 1.1.24 takes up this

856 Holt (2012: 99) points out that "infinity is a very nice number, along with its opposite, zero. Neither infinity nor zero needs an explanation. Finite numbers do need explanations, however." It is true that not all Buddhists would agree that a single moment has zero length, the opposition momentary- eternal yet shares features with zero-infinity.
857 Mahābhā 1 p. 18 l. 14-15: nityāś ca śabdāḥ/ nityeṣu ca śabdeṣu kūṭasthāir avicālibhir vānair bhavatayam anapāyopajanāvikāribhīh/.
858 On the eternity of words, cf. § II.4.2, above. Whatever the correct interpretation of Kātyāyana’s vārttika here, the idea that words are eternal was not foreign to this author. See below.
859 Frauwallner 1960a. The contents of this article are largely repeated and expanded in Frauwallner 1961.
same issue and raises the objection that if such be the case (utpattau), sentences would not naturally have a meaning. Frauwallner draws attention to the similarity in wording between the two sūtras: autpattika in the one, utpatti in the other. He finally points out that the so-called Vṛttikāra-granthā, which occurs in Śabara's Mīmāṃsabhāṣya on Mīmśāṁsā 1.1.5, ascribes the doctrine that words are nothing but their constituent sounds to Upavarsa, an early commentator on the Mīmāṃsāsūtra.860

Frauwallner compares the eternal individual sounds of the Mīmāṃsakas with the varṇaspāṭa of the grammarians, and thinks that they owe their existence to this concept. The idea of a varṇaspāṭa, however, is according to Frauwallner derived from that of a padaspāṭa. This in its turn means that a development must have taken place within the grammatical tradition in the time before these ideas made their appearance in the Mīmāṃsā texts. Patañjali's Mahābhāṣya is unfortunately of little use for studying this development. In Frauwallner's opinion, Patañjali has no understanding whatsoever of linguistic theory and of philosophy.

Frauwallner's low opinion of Patañjali has been criticized by subsequent scholars,861 but only in general terms. The question remains whether we can learn anything from the Mahābhāṣya about the problem that engaged Frauwallner, that is, about the nature of sound and word.

Regarding the nature of speech sounds we can be brief. It appears that Patañjali knew the idea of an individual sound conceived of as an entity, different from its particular pronunciation by various people in differing circumstances. His use of the word sphāṭa confirms this.

Patañjali uses the word sphāṭa at only two occasions, both times in connection with individual speech sounds. On P. 1.1.70 vt. 5 he distinguishes between the sphāṭa, which is the śabdā, and the dhvani, which is a quality of the śabdā.862 It is true that the two passages in which Patañjali uses the term sphāṭa pose some difficulties of interpretation,863 but these do not affect the main conclusion that for Patañjali the speech sound existed as an independent entity, different from the 'noise' that expressed, or perhaps rather: accompanied, it.

Patañjali is also aware of the notion of an eternal and unchanging speech sound (varṇa). We find it under Śivasūtra 1 vt. 12,864 while under P. 1.1.70 vt. 5 Patañjali calls them fixed (avasthitā).865

The relationship between speech sounds and words is perhaps most clearly discussed in the second Āṅhika of the Mahābhāṣya (I, p. 30, 1 ff.). The question raised is whether individual sounds have meaning or not. A number of arguments support the view that they do, among them the observation that a collection (sāṃghāta) of sounds has meaning. Other arguments are adduced to show that individual sounds have no meaning, which comes closer to Patañjali’s own opinion that most single sounds have no meaning, while certain verbal roots, suffixes, nominal stems and particles which consist of one sound do have meaning. Somewhere in this discussion Patañjali makes the remark (I, p. 31, 1. 10):

860 Frauwallner 1961: 121 (319); 1968: 38.
862 Mahā-bh I, p. 181, 1. 19-20: evam tarhi sphoṭāḥ śabdō dhvaniḥ śabdagunāha
863 See Joshi 1967: 13 f.
865 Mahā-bh I p. 181 l. 14: avasthitāḥ varnāḥ.
This seems to mean: "The collection is one single [entity, and this] one-ness is the meaning."

This remark is noteworthy, because there was no need whatsoever for Patañjali to make it. It is made by way of explanation of an expression in a vārttika (Śivasūtra 5 vt. 13) that reads samghātasyaikatvam arthaḥ "because a collection has one single meaning". Patañjali here goes beyond the vārttika in stating that a collection is a single entity. He does not explain this any further, nor does it play a significant role in the discussion.

It is not hard to imagine why Patañjali postulates the existence of a collection of sounds as one single entity. Individual sounds do not occur simultaneously, not even in a single word. In another context Patañjali points out that in the word gauḥ the sounds au and h are not there while g is being pronounced, and similarly about the other sounds. For sounds disappear as soon as they have arisen (uccaratapradhvamsinaḥ khalv api varṇāḥ). No single sound is the companion of another sound (na varno varṇasya sahāyaḥ). Seen in this way it is hard to assign any form of existence whatsoever to words.

Yet Patañjali looks upon words as existing entities and, what is more, as eternal entities. Part of a vārttika in the first Āhnika reads siddhe śabdārthasambandhe; Patañjali analyzes this as siddhe śabde 'ṛthasambandhe ca (Mahā-bh I, p. 6, l. 17) and interprets siddha to mean nitya ‘eternal’. In Patañjali’s interpretation therefore (which is almost certainly different from the one intended by the author of the vārttika) the word, its meaning (or denoted object), and the relation between the two are eternal. But for a word to be eternal it has to exist first, and this makes it all the more understandable that Patañjali postulates the existence of a collection of sounds as one single entity.

In order to understand what kind of entity a word is we return to the passage where Patañjali explained that the sounds of a word are not pronounced simultaneously. Having done this, he quotes a verse, then comments upon it in the following manner (Mahā-bh I, p. 356, l. 9-13):

buddhīviṣayam eva śabdānāṁ paurvāparyam/ iha ya eṣa manuṣyaḥ
prekṣaṇāpūrvakāṁ bhavati sa paśyaty asminn arthe 'yam śabdah prayoktavyo 'smiṁs
tāvac chabde 'yam tāvad varnās tato 'yam tato 'yam iti/

The first sentence seems to mean:

The sequence of sounds has the mind as its realm.

A more satisfactory translation would of course be possible if we could look upon buddhīviṣayam as a Tatpuruṣa compound. We could then translate:

866 On P. 1.4.109 vt. 10, Mahā-bh I, p. 356, l. 5 f.
867 Compare this with what a modern neuroscientist says about the perception of the word go:
"During audition, each successive sound reaches the ear at a later time. Before an entire pattern of sounds, such as the word GO, can be processed as a whole, it needs to be recoded, at a later processing stage, into a simultaneously available spatial pattern of activation. Such a processing stage is often called a working memory, and the activations that it stores are often called short-term memory (STM) traces." (Grossberg 1999: 2)
The sequence of sounds is the object of the mind.

I am not, however, aware of viṣaya as a neuter word. The rest of the passage translates:

A man who thinks before he acts, sees: "In this meaning that word must be used, in this word first this sound, then that one, and then that one."

S. D. Joshi, in the Introduction to his edition and translation of the Sphoṭanirṇaya (1967: 12), concludes from this passage that "the unity of words exists only in our mind". I fail to see how this conclusion can be drawn from the text. Rather it states that the mind creates the sequence of sounds while pronouncing a word. This is confirmed by the last quarter of the preceding verse, which has:

*buddhau kuryāt paurvāparyam*

[The wise one] produces the sequence in his mind.

The fact that the mind creates the sequence of sounds, does not imply that the real word, or the unity of words, exists only in the mind. A better interpretation would seem to be that the mind acts as an intermediary between the non-mental real word and the equally non-mental sounds.

Similar criticism could be directed against Joshi’s remark (1967: 10) that "by the term buddhinigrāhyah ‘grasped by the intellect’ (on Śivasūtra 1 vt. 12) Patañjali indicates that word is a mental or psychical entity". Patañjali describes the word in the very same line as ākāśadeśaḥ ‘situated in ether’, which seems to prove that no mental entity can be meant.\(^{868}\)

The mind is necessary if we assume that the collection (*samghāta*) is a single entity without a sequence of sounds in it. The fact that the mind intervenes between the *samghāta* and the sequence of sounds does not entail that this *samghāta* is of a mental nature. Patañjali, at any rate, does not say anything of the kind.\(^{869}\)

The kind of *samghāta* that Patañjali seems to speak about can hardly be described as a ‘collection’. If our interpretation up to this point is correct, it is rather an entity in its own right and no collection in the literal sense at all. The next question we have to turn to is whether or not Patañjali distinguished different types of verbal *samghātas*.

We find the two expressions *padasamghāta* and *varnasamghāta* under P. 3.2.49 vt. 3. The *vārttika* under which they occur reads: *karmanī samī ca*. It is explained by Patañjali in the following manner, correctly as it seems (II, p. 104, l. 2):

\[
\text{karmany upapade sampūrvād dhanter an vaktavyo ’ntyasya to vā vaktavyah}
\]

When [a word denoting] the grammatical object is *upapada*, [the suffix] an must be prescribed after the root *han* preceded by *sam*; and *f* must be prescribed as optionally [taking the place] of the final [sound of *han*].

\(^{868}\) Mahā-bh I, p. 18, l. 19-20: śrotropalabdhir buddhinigrāhyah prayogenābhijvalita ākāśadeśaḥ sabda[h].

\(^{869}\) The Vṛttikāra quoted in Śabara’s *Mīmāṃsābhāṣya* rejects the word as an existing entity, even though he accepts something mental, viz. *samskāra*, as an intermediary between sounds and understanding (Frauwallner 1968: 38-41). The entity rejected by the Vṛttikāra appears to be similar to the one accepted by Patañjali.
Patañjali then gives two examples:

\[ \text{varnasamghātaḥ} \quad \text{varṇasamghātaḥ/} \quad \text{padasamghātaḥ/} \]

[This explains] \text{varṇasamghāta} [besides] \text{varnasamghāta, padasamghāta [besides] padasamghāta.}

The grammatical formation here given is peculiar, and has a direct bearing on the philosophical question we are investigating. Normally the word \text{samghāta} is derived with the suffix \text{GHaN} in the sense \text{bhāva} by P. 3.3.18 (\text{bhāve}). This is actually done e.g. by Jinendrabuddhi in his \text{Nyāsa} on P. 7.3.32 (VI, p. 37) and by Bhānuji Dīkṣita in his \text{Rāmāśramī} on \text{Amarakoṣa} 2.5.39 (p. 258-59). What is more, Patañjali himself uses the word \text{samghāta} often as a separate word, not being part of a compound, and therefore without a word denoting the grammatical object as \text{upapada}. In all these cases the above derivation is not valid, so that Patañjali himself must have derived the un compounded word differently, most probably with the suffix \text{GHaN} as well. Why then does he derive \text{samghāta} differently in these two compounds?

One possible answer might be considered to lie in P. 2.2.14 \text{karmāṇi ca}. This rule forbids compound formation on the basis of an objective genitive; an example would be \text{varṇāṇām samghātaḥ} and \text{padāṇām samghātaḥ}. However, the \text{vārttikas} and Bhāsya on P. 2.2.14 make clear that this prohibition is only valid where both object and subject are mentioned; it should not therefore prevent simple compounds like \text{varnasamghātaḥ} and \text{padasamghātaḥ}.

There is another reason to reject the view that Patañjali merely wants to secure the compounding of \text{varṇāṇām samghātaḥ} and \text{padāṇām samghātaḥ} in spite of P. 2.2.14. The result in that case would be only \text{varna-} and \text{pada-samghāta}. As it is, also the forms \text{varna-} and \text{pada-samghāta}, with retroflex \text{t}, are derived.\footnote{This is not the place to discuss the peculiar form \text{samghāta}. Note however that Burrow (1971: 550) proposes to see in \text{samghāta} the non cerebrализed form of the root \text{ghaṭ}.} We cannot but conclude that Patañjali here derives some special compounds in some special meanings.

Turning to the meaning, we note that \text{varna-} and \text{padasamghāta} are derived with the krt-suffix \text{aN}. This suffix has the meaning ‘agent’ by P. 3.4.67 (\text{kartari krt}). Derived with \text{aN} the words \text{samghāta} and \text{samghāta} in, say, \text{varnasamghāta / -samghāta} mean therefore "what collects (sound / sounds)". Derived with \text{GHaN}, on the other hand, the compound \text{varnasamghāta} would mean "collection of sounds". The later grammarians agree with this distinction in meaning. The \text{Kāśikā} on P. 3.2.49, for example, explains the compounds derived with \text{aN} as follows (I, p. 221): \text{varnān samhantti varnasamghātaḥ, varnasamghātaḥ/ padānī samhantti padasamghātaḥ, padasamghātaḥ/}.

What is the difference between "a collection of sounds / words" and "what collects sound(s) / word(s)"? Laddu (1971: 316) proposes to understand the forms derived with \text{aN} as "one who collects the sounds, a phonetician" and "one who collects or codifies words, a lexicographer" respectively. But he admits that no trace of such usage can be found in the surviving literature.

Another solution is possible. For Patañjali, as we have seen, a word is an entity in its own right, not just a collection of sounds; for him a word rather "collects sounds", or perhaps "joins a word together". We see that it is not yet clear whether a word is designated by the expression \text{varnasamghāta} or rather by \text{padasamghāta}; we shall return
to this question below. At this point it is important to understand that for Patañjali a word is no collection in the strict sense of the term, but rather a ‘collector’.

Let us now turn to the one and only passage in the Mahābhāṣya where one of the terms discussed is actually used. The expression padasamghāta occurs here as part of a larger compound, which does not fail to evoke problems in its own right. The context is as follows. In the Bhāṣya on P. 1.1.51 vt. 9 a discussion occurs in which the word nārkalpi figures. This word is derived from nṛkalpa with the suffix iṅ, by P. 4.1.95 (ata iṅ). Nṛkalpa itself consists of the noun nṛ ‘man’ and the suffix kalpaP, prescribed by P. 5.3.67 (tādāsamāptau kalpadeśyadeśīyarah). In the derivation of nārkalpi the r in nṛ is replaced by ā (P. 7.2.117 taddhīteṣv acām ādeḥ), which is then followed by r (P. 1.1.51 ur āṇ raparaḥ). This results in

nā-r-kalpi.

The question is whether r is part of preceding nā or of following kalpi. If it is part of nā there is a difficulty. Nṛ in nṛkalpa is technically called a pada, by P. 1.4.17 (svādiśv asarvanāmanāsthāne). But then nār in nārkalpi is a pada too. This would lead to the undesired consequence that r be replaced by a visarjanīya, by P. 8.3.15 (kharavāsānayor visarjanīyah), resulting in undesired *nāhkalpi.

Can this problem be solved by stating that r is rather part of following kalpi? Patañjali says no. He explains (I, p. 129, l. 5-6):

kalpipadasamghātabhakto ’sau notsahate ’vayavasya padāntatāṁ vibhantum iti kṛtvā visarjanīyah prāpnoti/

The commentators agree in interpreting padasamghāta here as pratyayasamudāya ‘collection of suffixes’. This is understandable, for kalpi is the result of combining the two suffixes kalpaP and iṅ. This interpretation would justify the following translation:

That [sound r, even though] part of the collection of suffixes kalpi, cannot do away with the fact that a portion [of this expression kalpi, viz. r] is the final [sound] of a pada. As a result [substitution of ] visarjanīya would take place.

Yet this interpretation of padasamghāta is not acceptable, for various reasons. The first one is that pada means ‘word’, not ‘suffix’. In order to appreciate the second reason we must turn to a number of passages in the Mahābhāṣya where Patañjali uses closely similar words and phrases. Take the Bhāṣya on P. 1.1.47 vt. 7, which reads (I, p. 117, l. 1-2):

samghātabhakto ’sau notsahate ’vayavasyegantatāṁ vibhantum

We notice the close similarity of this sentence with the earlier one. Here the addition of the augment nUM in the nom. nt. dual of such dvigu compounds as paṅcaratnini (from paṅcaratni ‘five cubits’) is under discussion. The assumption has been made that nUM is part of what precedes it. Patañjali’s statement here means:
That [sound \(n\), i.e., the augment \(nUM\), though] part of the collection \([pañcārati-n]\), cannot do away with the fact that a part [of this collection, viz., \(pañcārati\)] ends in a vowel [belonging to the pratyāhāra] \(iK\).

The ‘collection’ here is the combination of the two parts that are relevant in the discussion, in this case of the part ending in \(i\), i.e. \(pañcārati\), and of \(nUM\).

Patañjali repeats the same sentence under P. 7.1.73 (I, p. 266, l. 5), where he makes the same point. Here the examples are \(pañcatrapuṇā\) and \(pañcatrapuṇah\). Here too the augment \(nUM\), though part of the collection \(pañcatrapu-n\), cannot do away with the fact that the part \(pañcatrapu\) ends in an \(iK\) vowel.

The expression \(samghātabhakta\) is used at a few other occasions, always in the following phrase:

\[
\text{asau (or: ayaṁ) samghātabhakto na śakyaḥ (or: aśakyaḥ) X-grahaṇena grahitum}
\]

\(X\) varies with the circumstances. At one place the phrase indicates that the prefix \(aT\), though part of the collection (\(samghāta\)), is not denoted by the term \(dhātu\) ‘verbal root’.\(^{871}\)

The infix \(mUK\), similarly, in examples like \(pacamāna\), is not part of what is denoted by the expression \(adupadeśa\) "what is taught as ending in \(a\)".\(^{872}\) Again, the prefix \(aT\) added to a verbal root belonging to the list \(gadādi\), is part of the collection (\(samghāta\)), yet is not covered by the term \(gadādi\).\(^{873}\)

In all these cases Patañjali uses the term \(samghāta\) to refer to the collection of the two parts that are relevant in the discussion. If we now return to the original passage that contains the compound \(kalpipadasamghātabhakta\), we see that the interpretation of the commentators will not do. They think that \(samghāta\) here refers to the collection of suffixes that constitutes \(kalpi\), but that collection is not immediately relevant in the discussion. What is relevant is the collection \(r-kalpi\), or, perhaps, \(nā-r-kalpi\). The most natural interpretation of \(kalpipadasamghāta\) in the circumstances seems to me: "collection of \(kalpi\) with [the preceding] \(pada\)." If we accept this interpretation, Patañjali’s statement comes to mean:

That [sound \(r\), even though] part of the collection of \(kalpi\) with [the preceding] \(pada\) (i.e., \(nā-r-kalpi\)), cannot do away with the fact that a portion [of this collection, viz., the sound \(r\)] is the final [sound] of a \(pada\).

Of course, another interpretation is possible. One might urge that the collection under discussion is not \(nā-r-kalpi\), but merely \(r-kalpi\). Patañjali’s \(kalpipadasamghāta\) would then have to be interpreted as: "the \(padasamghāta\) [which is] \((r-)kalpi\". This interpretation is open to the criticism that if Patañjali meant \(rkalpi\), he might have said \(rkalpi\) rather than just \(kalpi\). If, in spite of this criticism, this last interpretation is accepted, it must be concluded that \(padasamghāta\) is here used in a peculiar sense. \(Kalpi\), and \(rkalpi\), is no \(pada\) in Pāṇini’s technical sense, but it can well be looked upon as a ‘word’ in some way. It is at least conceivable that Patañjali, knowing that the term \(pada\)

\(^{871}\) On P. 1.3.60 vt. 3 (I, p. 286, l. 1).
\(^{872}\) On P. 6.1.186 vt. 3 (III, p. 112, l. 12); and on P. 7.2.82 vt. 1 and 3 (III, p. 303, l. 7-8 and l. 16-17).
\(^{873}\) On P. 8.4.17 vt. 1 (III, p. 459, l. 7).
would be inappropriate here, chose a term which he knew was used in non-grammatical circles, a term which had not been narrowly defined like Pāṇini’s *pada*, viz., *padasaṃghāta*.

In support of this interpretation one might adduce the fact that *nārkalpi* is not the only example which is discussed in this passage of the *Mahābhāṣya*. Other examples are *nārkuta* and *nārpatya*. The second halves of these examples are *padas*, so Patañjali’s choice of a non-technical synonym of *pada* in order to designate *kalpi* might be considered understandable. Note that this interpretation of Patañjali’s use of *padasaṃghāta* presupposes that *padasaṃghāta* was in use primarily in non-grammatical circles, or at any rate had no technical grammatical meaning. It further makes only sense on the assumption that a *padasaṃghāta* is not a “collection of words”, say a sentence, but rather a single word conceived of as an indivisible entity. On this assumption *varṇasaṃghāta* would refer to a single speech sound conceived of as a single undivided entity.

We must not conclude too much from this possible interpretation of Patañjali’s use of *kalpipadasaṃghātabhakta*. This interpretation is far from certain, and, as we have seen, a more conventional interpretation is possible, in which *padasaṃghāta* does not refer to a single concept at all.

We can distinguish two distinct aspects in Patañjali’s ideas. For him words are (i) entities with an independent existence, (ii) which are, moreover, eternal. Some authors, such as Joshi and Roodbergen (1986: xi, 114), concentrate on the second aspect, the eternality. They conclude that Patañjali attempts “to introduce the Mīmāṃsā doctrine of the *nityatva* of the word”. We have seen already that this position is chronologically not without difficulties, not to speak of the problem that in Mīmāṃsā not the independent word came to be looked upon as eternal, but rather the speech sounds which constitute it. Joshi and Roodbergen do not discuss these difficulties, and we may conclude that the connection with Mīmāṃsā is unlikely at best.

There is a passage in the *Mahābhāṣya* which seems to point in another direction. P. 1.2.45 vt. 11 reads:

*saṃghātārthavattvāc ceti ced drṣṭo hy atadarthena guṇena guṇino ’ṛthabhāvah*  
And if [you say that individual sounds have meaning] because collections (*saṃghāta*) have meaning, [the answer is no,] because subsidiary parts that do not serve a certain purpose are seen to constitute something that does serve that purpose.

The Bhāṣya explains the *vārttika* and then gives the following example (I, p. 220, l. 22-24):

*yathā ... rathāṅgāni vihṛtāni pratyekāṃ vrajikriyāṃ praty asamarthāni bhavanti tatsamudāyaś ca rathah samartha evam eṣām varṇānām samudāyā arthavanto ’vayavā anarthakā iti//*  
For example, the parts of a chariot when taken apart are not each of them fit for movement; their combination (*samudāya*), i.e. the chariot, is fit [for that]. In the same way the combinations of these sounds have meaning [even though] the parts have not.
This example does not add much to our understanding of the entities called sangha by Patañjali, but it suggests an interesting connection with Buddhism: the Buddhist Milindaapañha, too, speaks of a chariot as a collection of its parts; in the case of Buddhism, this collection has no real existence, as we have seen. Interestingly, another passage from the Mahābhāṣya seems to say that a collection is nothing but its parts (avayavātmakāh samudāyah). 874

Patañjali on derivations

Another innovation of Patañjali that has a direct bearing on Grammar is the following. Certain Pāṇinian derivations require more information than merely what is available at the preceding stage. For example, in order to derive the 3rd person singular imperative of bhū, i.e. bhavatu, one needs to know that earlier in the derivation lot has been replaced by ti. There are other derivations where information of subsequent stages is required in order to proceed. A detailed study of Patañjali’s treatment of such cases shows that he did not like either of these two possibilities. Patañjali admits only derivations in which all the information for the next step is present at the immediately preceding stage. Since many derivations are not like this, Patañjali subjects them to highly technical and complicated analyses, at the end of which he can somehow claim that they all follow his scheme.

A detailed demonstration of this observation can be found below. The question why Patañjali wanted to impose this kind of linearity on grammatical derivations is not, in itself, technical, and allows indeed of a simple and straightforward answer. Patañjali imposes on grammatical derivations the same scheme that the Buddhist scholiasts had imposed on reality: both consist of a succession of stages in which the step toward each next stage is fully determined by the immediately preceding stage. If we recall that a grammatical derivation for Patañjali is a mental event (see § II A.4.2, above), and that mental events were looked upon by the Buddhist scholiasts as a succession of stages that characterizes reality in general, Patañjali’s imposition of linearity on grammatical derivations is not even surprising. 875

Patañjali does not, of course, admit that he has borrowed this scheme from his Buddhist neighbours. But then he does not admit even that Buddhists exist. As a traditional Brahmin he is bound to maintain that his knowledge, every bit of it, is ancient, and owes nothing to anybody whatsoever. (Remember that both the Sanskrit language and the Veda are eternal, i.e. beginningless.) But this pretence should not mislead us. The scheme Patañjali imposes on Pāṇinian derivations is the cause of endless complications that can only be resolved in the most ingenious ways, often through the introduction of principles and rules unknown to Pāṇini. There is no sensible explanation for this bizarre new requirement, except for the fact (which we assume is a fact) that Patañjali shared an intellectual world with Buddhist scholiasts who had just recently created a philosophy in which this kind of linear step by step thinking constituted a crucial ingredient.


875 Cf. Deshpande 1997: 104: “It is tempting to suggest that the emerging traditions of Buddhism may have forced Kātyāyana and Patañjali to think of new philosophical problems.”
Let us now consider in some detail the way in which Patañjali tries to impose linearity on grammatical derivations.

Paul Thieme (1982: 18-19 [1185-1186]) is no doubt right in thinking that, from Patañjali’s point of view, speakers ‘put together’ the units of speech each time a man is speaking Sanskrit. This, he proposes, emerges from a statement made by Patañjali, which states: *samaskṛtya samaskṛtya padāny utstrīyante “the words are ejaculated [in speaking] after being put together [in the mind] from their elements each time”.*\(^{876}\) He could have also referred to another passage where Patañjali expresses himself as follows: “What is this transformation of the effect (mentioned in a vārttika)? The word ‘effect’ refers to concepts (*buddhi*). It is the concept that is transformed [and not the linguistic unit itself]. … [Referring to the suppletion of the root *as* by *bhū* taught by P. 2.4.52 (*aster bhū*), Patañjali continues:] Here [initially] the root *as* is taught without any specification. Thus, he [= the user of the grammar] came to think that *as* occurs everywhere. Through P. 2.4.52, he comes to think of *bhū* instead of *as* [in certain specific contexts]. In its own context, the root *as* is [actually] permanent, and so is the root *bhū* permanent [in its own context]. However, [through Pāṇini’s rule of suppletion] his [= student’s] notion (*buddhi*) is transformed.”\(^{877}\)

I seems indeed clear that for Patañjali, grammatical derivations must follow an orderly sequence. Moreover, each step in this orderly sequence must be determined by the elements already in place. That is to say, in a derivation as envisaged by Patañjali it is not necessary to know what came before and what will come after. The elements in place must suffice to determine which next step will be taken. This, at any rate, is the ideal picture that Patañjali has of a grammatical derivation.

This picture can be applied without great difficulty to a large number of Pāṇinian derivations. A simple example is the derivation of *bhavati*, the third person singular present tense of the root *bhū* ‘be, become’. The form *bhavati* is the end product of a number of steps, in each of which an operation takes place that is determined by the situation at hand:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{bhū-} & \text{IA}T \quad 3.4.78 \text{ tiptā}ṣjhιsithasthamibvasmas...
\text{bhū-} & \text{Ś}āpipTiP \quad 3.1.68 \text{ kartāri śap}
\text{bhū-} & \text{a-}tī \quad 1.3.9 \text{ tasya lopah}
\text{bho-} & \text{a-}tī \quad 7.3.84 \text{ sārva}dhatukārdhādhātukayoḥ
\text{bhav-} & \text{a-}tī \quad 6.1.78 \text{ eco 'yāvāyāvaḥ}
\end{align*}
\]

The substitution of *av* for *o* in the last step can only take place here, and not earlier, for only here the sound *o* has made its appearance which can then be replaced by *av*. Similarly, the elision of markers can only take place once they have made their appearance; one might squabble about whether elision should take place immediately after the appearance of the marker or somewhat later, but this does not change the fact

\(^{876}\) Mahā-bh I p. 39 l. 18; tr. Thieme.

that this elision does not need to know what happened earlier or what is going to happen later. One may also wonder whether substitution of o for ū in bhū, so as to arrive at bho, must take place before or after SaP has been inserted; in both cases bhū is followed by a sārvadhātukā suffix, so that both situations fulfil the requirements of P. 7.3.84 sārvadhātukārdhātukayōḥ. Whatever the answer to this question, it is clear that substitution of o for ū does not need to know anything about the earlier and later stages of the derivation.

As is well known, many of the technical discussions of Pāṇinian grammar concern issues like the ones just mentioned. Often they are about situations in which two or more rules apply simultaneously. The question that they try to resolve is: which of the two or three rules that apply takes precedence? The discussions are often complex, but a number of general principles stand out. I present them in a form that I have copied from a handout accompanying a lecture by S. D. Joshi and Paul Kiparsky during a presentation at the Pāṇini Workshop in honour of S. D. Joshi, held at Stanford University in March 2002:

a. Rules apply at any opportunity, unless something prevents it. If rule A can feed rule B (create new inputs to B), it does.

b. If more than one rule is applicable to a form, A supersedes B under the following conditions, in order of increasing strength:
   (1) if A follows B in the Aṣṭādhyāyī (A is para),
   (2) if A bleeds (eliminates inputs to) B, but not vice versa (A is nitya),
   (3) if A is conditioned internally to B (A is antaraṅga),
   (4) if the inputs to which A is applicable are a proper subset of the inputs to which B is applicable (A is apavāda).

This brief characterisation — point b of which can be considered a translation of Paribhāṣā 38 in Nāgīrī's Paribhāṣenduśekhara: pūrvaparanityāntaraṅgāpavādānām uttarottaram balīyāḥ — shows that, according to the traditional view, decisions concerning the continuation of a grammatical derivation at any particular point are taken on the basis of the situation at hand. More specifically, no information about the earlier or later stages of the derivation is required to make a correct decision at any particular stage.

In reality this linear approach is often confronted with difficulties. Sometimes an awareness of what precedes in a derivation seems to be necessary. There are also derivations where knowledge of what will come later appears to be essential. We will consider a number of cases of both kinds, and study how Pātañjali deals with them. We begin with some derivations of the first kind.

Knowledge of what precedes

George Cardona observed in 1970 (p. 53) that a rule such as P. 3.4.86 (er uḥ [loṭah 85]) — which substitutes tu for ti which is itself a substitute of loṭ, as in paca-tu derived from paca-ti — shows that Pāṇini considered the derivation history of elements pertinent to operations affecting them. This may be true, but there are reasons to think that Pātañjali did not like looking back in the course of a derivation. The following is a discussion of all the passages where he uses the ‘notion of what came before’.
Consider the derivation of avadāta, past passive participle of the root daiP, with marker P. The derivation can take the following form:

1. ava-daiP-Ktā
2. ava-dai-ta 1.3.9 tasya lopaḥ
3. ava-dā-ta 6.1.45 ād eca upadeśe 'śiti

avidāta

This derivation presents Patañjali with a problem. The verbal root daiP, once it takes the form dā in situation (3) by P. 6.1.45, should be called ghu by P. 1.1.20 dādhā ghv adāp. This in its turn would have the undesired consequence that dad must be substituted for dā by P. 7.4.46 do dad ghoḥ, so that the correct form avadāta would not be obtained. The common sense solution to this problem lies in the circumstance that the root daiP, and therefore dā in situation (3) of the derivation, cannot be called ghu, since the expression adāp in sūtra P. 1.1.20 dādhā ghv adāp prevents this. For Patañjali the situation is less simple. Since for him the elision of the marker P has already taken place in situation (2), nothing in situation (3) prevents the application of P. 1.1.20 dādhā ghv adāp. The form dā that appears in situation (3) is not therefore dāP, and nothing prevents it from being considered ghu.

At this point Patañjali proposes that wherever elements with markers are involved, the notion of what came before must be taken into account (etac cātra yuktam yat sarvesv eva sānubandhakagrahaṇeṣu bhūtapārvagatir vijñāyat'). As a result the marker P will not be forgotten in situation (3), and the form dā which occurs there will be known to have that marker, and therefore to be really dāP. The exception adāp in sūtra 1.1.20 dādhā ghv adāp will as a result prevent the form dā in situation (3) from being considered ghu.

Patañjali’s proposal starts from the assumption that elision of the marker P (by 1.3.9 tasya lopaḥ) precedes the substitution of ā for ai (by P. 6.1.45 ād eca upadeśe 'śiti).

To justify this particular order Patañjali adds the phrase: anaimittiko hy anubandhalopas tāvaty eva bhavati. This means no doubt: “For the elision of markers, being without cause, takes place first of all.”

All this agrees with, or comes close to, the common sense understanding of the derivation of avadāta. However, it has obliged Patañjali to postulate that knowledge of preceding stages in the derivation is needed in order to proceed correctly at a subsequent stage. And this is not to his liking. He therefore makes a different suggestion. He proposes acceptance of a special rule — which he claims Pāṇini “makes known” (jñāpayati) elsewhere in his Aṣṭādhyāyī — that has the form nānubandhakṛtam anejantatvam. This rule lives on as Paribhāṣa 7 of Nāgara's Paribhāṣendusēkha, and has been translated by Kielhorn (1874: 36) in the following way: “[A root which, when destitute of anubandhas, ends in either e or o or ai, must] not [be considered] to have ceased to end in either e or o or ai, when an anubandha has been attached to it.”

Patañjali’s proposal only makes sense on the assumption that the derivation of avadāta will follow a different order this time, viz.:

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878 Mahā-bh I p. 76 l. 10-11 (on P. 1.1.20 vt. 9).
Elision of the marker $P$ follows this time the substitution of $a$ for $ai$.

Patañjali does not explain how attribution of the technical designation $ghu$ to $dā$ is prevented at stage (3). Whatever may have been his answer to this question (which is not recorded in the *Mahābhāṣya*), it is clear that his second proposal is meant to circumvent the requirement of needing to know what happened earlier in the derivation.

It seems however that even this second proposal does not fully satisfy Patañjali, for he comes up with a third one: *avadāta* is not derived from the root *daiP*, but from *dāP*. We are not going to try to follow Patañjali in all this. For our purposes it is sufficient to note that Patañjali was obviously not happy with the idea that an awareness of earlier stages of a derivation might be required to bring it to a good end.

(ii) The elision of markers gives rise to difficulties elsewhere, too. Patañjali deals with the difficulties that occur in the derivation of *gomān*. The relevant part of the derivation of this form is:

\[
\begin{align*}
\textit{go-ma}tU & \quad \textit{go-matU} \quad \textit{go-mā-n} \\
\textit{go-mā-s} & \quad \textit{go-mā-t} \quad \textit{go-mā-nUT-t} \\
\textit{go-mā-n} & \quad \textit{go-mā-n} \\
\end{align*}
\]

Patañjali discusses this derivation under sūtra 6.4.14 *atvasantasya cādhātoḥ*. The first part of this sūtra, *atu*, covers suffixes like *DavatU* and *KtavatU*, but should also include *matUP*. This last suffix, however, contains *atUP*, not just *atU*. A vārttika therefore proposes that a special mention must be made of suffixes that have $P$ as marker.

Patañjali disagrees and points out that once the marker $P$ is elided by 1.3.9 *tasya lopāḥ*, what is left is *atU*, which is precisely the form mentioned in the sūtra. At that point the suffix is no longer *atupanta*, but has become *atvanta*. This proposed solution gives, of course, rise to the objection that in a similar manner the suffix will no longer be *atvanta* once the marker $U$ is elided. Patañjali responds feebly that by taking into consideration the notion of what was there before (viz. *atU*), this last problem is solved, but this only leads to the reproach that this same procedure takes us back to *atUP*.

It is not necessary to study the way in which Patañjali tries to solve the problem here. It is clear that here, at any rate, he plays with *bhūtapūrvagati*, the notion of what was there before, but does not in the end accept it.

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(iii) This resistance on the part of Patañjali is confirmed by other passages in the *Mahābhāṣya*. The idea that the notion of what came before has to be taken into account pops up in Patañjali’s comments on P. 1.1.56 vt. 21. Here the derivation of the form āṭṭha is discussed. The relevant part of this derivation is as follows (cp. Joshi & Roodbergen 1990: transl. p. 105):

... 

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>bruva</th>
<th>3.4.84</th>
<th>bruvaḥ pañcānām ādita āho bruvaḥ</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>āṭṭha</td>
<td>8.2.35</td>
<td>āhas thāḥ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>āṭṭha</td>
<td>8.4.55</td>
<td>ḫāri ca</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>āṭṭha</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The difficulty which presents itself in this derivation is that P. 7.3.93 bruva īṭ prescribes the augment īṭ after brū and before a sārvadhāṭuka ending beginning with a consonant. Since āḥ is substituted for brū, it must be treated like brū by P. 1.1.56 sṭhānivad ādeśo 'nalvidhau. The ending thā, moreover, clearly begins with a consonant, so that the incorrect form *āhīṭha* seems hard to avoid. However, if one were to proceed like this, sūtra 8.2.35 āhas thāḥ would no longer have any use. The fact that this sūtra nevertheless has its place in the Aṣṭādhyāyī obliges us to draw some conclusion. But which one exactly?

Here Patañjali (on P. 1.1.56 vt. 21) puts the following thought into the mouth of an opponent. This rule 8.2.35 āhas thāḥ has been formulated in order to let us know that the notion of what came before must be taken in account.881 P. 8.2.35 prescribes substitution of final h of āḥ by th, if an ending beginning with a consonant included in the pratyāhāra jhal follows. After adding the augment īṭ, the ending will be īṭha and will no longer begin with such a consonant. But at an earlier stage of the derivation the ending was still thā, and did begin with a consonant included in the pratyāhāra jhal. According to the opponent, therefore, P. 8.2.35 can be applied, presumably leading to some such incorrect form as *āhīṭha*.

Patañjali disagrees, of course. As a matter of fact, he uses the occasion to criticise the principle that the notion of what came before must be taken into account. If that principle were valid, not only the ending thā, but all endings before which āḥ is substituted for brū will have to be considered as beginning with a consonant included in the pratyāhāra jhal, for these five endings are substituted for tiP, tas, jhi, siP and thas respectively, each of which begins with such a consonant. That being the case, Pāṇini might as well immediately have substituted āṭṭha for brū in sūtra 3.4.84, which would then read: *bruvaḥ pañcānām ādita ātho bruvaḥ*. The fact that Pāṇini has not formulated the sūtra in this manner shows that the opponent was wrong to begin with, and that the difficulty has to be resolved differently. It also shows that Patañjali, in this case too, has no sympathy for the idea that earlier stages of a derivation should be taken into consideration in subsequent ones.882

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881 Mahā-bh I p. 139 l. 14: asti hy anyad etasya vacane prayojanam/ kim/ bhūtapūrvagatir yathā viññāveta/.

882 Mahā-bh I p. 139 l. 15-16: yady evaṃ thavacanam anarthakaṃ syāt/ āthim evāyam uccārayet/ bruvaḥ pañcānām ādita ātho bruva īṭu/.
(iv) The Mahābhāṣya evokes the same principle in the context of P. 6.1.177 nām anyatarasyām, which optionally prescribes the udātta accent for the genitive plural ending nām in certain circumstances. This accent should, for example, be given to the final syllable nām of agnīnām, the genitive plural of agni. The relevant steps of the derivation are:

agni-ām
agni-nUṬ-ām 7.1.54 hrasvanadyāpo nuṭ
agni-nām 6.4.3 nāmi
agni-nām 6.1.177 nām anyatarasyām

The difficulty in this derivation is that in 6.1.177 nām anyatarasyām there is anuvṛtti of hrasvāt (from 6.1.176 hrasvanuḍbhyaṁ matup). The ending nām in agnīnām does not however follow a short vowel. And a discussion brings to light that sūtra 6.1.177 cannot be applied to any example where nām does follow a short vowel. Patañjali therefore proposes that the notion of what was there before must be taken into account. The final i of agni was short, and this earlier circumstance has to be taken into account, so that sūtra 6.1.177 can be applied to agnīnām.

Patañjali’s subsequent discussion shows that, once again, he is not happy with the idea of taking into account earlier stages of the derivation. He settles for an interpretation of sūtra 6.1.177 in which the udātta accent is optionally prescribed for nām when it follows a word whose final vowel is short before the altogether different suffix matuḍ. Patañjali’s interpretation raises serious questions as to his use of anuvṛtti — the nominative matup of the preceding sūtra appears here as the locative matau — but it is clear that he prefers this forced interpretation of 6.1.177 to making use of knowledge of earlier stages in the same derivation.

The same derivation is at the centre of another discussion in the Mahābhāṣya, this one under P. 6.4.3 nāmi. The question here is why this sūtra is formulated nāmi rather than *āmi. It turns out that in the latter case, at the stage agni-ām, lengthening of i (by the modified sūtra 6.4.3 *āmi) would have precedence over adding nUṬ (by 7.1.54 hrasvanadyāpo nuṭ), because the former rule would be nīya. The discussion further shows that there would in that case be no use for sūtra 7.1.54. At his point Patañjali suggests that the notion of what was there before might have to be taken into account: nUṬ can then be added to agni-ām because the i of agni was short at an earlier stage.

This time Patañjali does not explicitly reject this line of reasoning. That does not mean that he pronounces the rule 6.4.3 nāmi badly formulated. No, he passes on to another justification of the formulation given by Pāṇini: this particular formulation has been chosen in view of the later rule nopadḥāyaṁ. It is hard to conclude with certainty whether or not Patañjali here accepted the reasoning based on the notion of what was there before as valid.

(v) Patañjali has occasion to invoke the principle under sūtra 6.3.66 khity anavyayasya. This sūtra prescribes shortening of the final vowel of a stem when followed by an

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883 Mahā-bh III p. 109 l. 8-9: āhāyām hrasvāntād iti na ca nāmi hrasvānto ‘sti tatra bhūtapūrvagatir vijñāyate/ hrasvāntaṁ yad bhūtapūrvam iti/.
884 Mahā-bh III p. 109 l. 20-21: athavā naivām vijñāyate nāṁsvare matau hrasvagrahaṇaṁ kartavyam iti/ kathaṁ tarhi/ nāṁsvare matau hrasvād iti vartata iti/.
Patañjali does not tell us why he introduces mUM before considering shortening of \( \ddot{\text{a}} \) in \( \dddot{\text{a}} \), but we may assume that the fact that P. 6.3.67 comes after P. 6.3.66 and is therefore para with regard to the latter made him decide so.\(^{885}\) The difficulty with this derivation is that \( \ddot{\text{a}} \) is no longer the final vowel of \( \dddot{\text{a}} \) once the augment mUM has been added to it. Patañjali, after having explored some other possibilities first, proposes that the notion of what was there before should be taken into account.\(^{886}\)

I am not sure whether I have fully understood Patañjali’s remaining discussion on this sūtra. He concludes it with the statement: \textit{tasmāt pārvoktāv eva parihārav}, which I find particularly puzzling. This means something like “Therefore the two refutations mentioned earlier [must be accepted]”. I have not been able to identify the two refutations mentioned earlier. However that may be, it seems clear that Patañjali’s proposal to take into account the notion of what was there before is part of a line of argument which he subsequently abandons.

(vi) Sūtra 7.2.37 \textit{graho ‘liṭī dīṛghah} is meant to account for forms like grahītā, with long \( \ddot{\text{i}} \). This is only possible, it is objected, if there is \textit{anuvṛtti} in this sūtra of \( \dddot{\text{a}} \)h, the genitive singular of \( \dddot{\text{i}} \). This however is problematic, because the only \( \dddot{\text{i}} \) used in the preceding sūtras is a nominative singular \( \dddot{\text{i}} \) in P. 7.2.35 \textit{ārdhadhātukasye dvādeḥ}. The question therefore presents itself whether \textit{anuvṛtti} of the two genitives \textit{ārdhadhātukasya} and \textit{dvādeḥ} might suffice to arrive at the correct form. The derivation of grahītā passes through the following stages:

1. \textit{grah-tā}  
2. \textit{grah-\text{i}tā}  
3. \textit{grah-\text{i}tā}  

At stage (2) the root \textit{grah} is indeed followed by an \textit{ārdhadhātuka} suffix, but this suffix does not begin with a sound included in the \textit{pratyāhāra val}, because it now begins with short \( \text{i} \). However, at the preceding stage (1) the suffix began with \( \ddot{\text{a}} \), which is included in \textit{val}. Patañjali therefore suggests that the problem is solved by taking into account the notion of what was there before.\(^{887}\)

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885 This also appears to be Nāgeśa’s position.
886 Mahā-bh III p. 165 l. 22-23: \textit{athavā kḥiṭi hrasvo bhavaity ucyate/ kḥity anantarav hravabhāvī nāśītī krṭvā bhūtapūrvagatī vijñāyate/ ajantaṃ yad bhūtapūrvam iti}.
887 Mahā-bh III p. 294 l. 14-16 (on P. 7.2.37 vt. 6): \textit{ārdhadhātukasyetvartate/ grahāḥ parasyārdhadhātukasya dīṛghatvaṃ vaksyāmi/ ihūpi tarhi prāprnoti/ grahaṇam grahaṇīyam/ valāde іti varstate/ evam api graḥītā grahiṭum atra na prāprnoti/ bhūtapūrvagatī bhaviṣyatī}. 
In what follows it is clear that Patañjali is not happy with this solution. In the end he accepts that itaḥ has to be understood in P. 7.2.37, to be explained by anuvṛtti with changed case-ending of it from P. 7.2.35.

(vii) An equally hypothetical context is provided by the discussion of daridrā under sūtra 7.2.67 vasv ekājādghasām. This sūtra prescribes the augment iṭ before vasU after, among other things, a root having but one vowel. The formulation of this sūtra gives rise to doubts, for clearly the expression ekāc is meant to concern roots that have but one vowel after reduplication. It concerns forms like pecivān, not bibhidvān. Yet this special condition is not stated.

At some point in the discussion Patañjali proposes that the mention of āṭ in the sūtra shows that reduplicated roots are concerned, for there are no non-reduplicated roots in ā that have more than one vowel. This, an opponent points out, is not true. The root daridrā ends in ā and has more than one vowel. It is true that this ā is elided in the situation where P. 7.2.67 might apply. This elision, as P. 6.4.114 vt. 2 specifies, is siddha with regard to the prescription of suffixes. Patañjali on P. 7.2.67 adds that this elision is also siddha with regard to the prescription of the augment iṬ. All this means that daridrā cannot count in this context as a case of a root in ā that has more than one vowel. The opponent is not disheartened. He insists that, also in this specific context, it is a root in ā having more than one vowel if one takes into account the notion of what was there before.888

It is not clear to what extent Patañjali takes this argument seriously. He abandons the discussion of daridrā in order to concentrate on another indication which presumably shows that reduplicated roots with one vowel are intended in P. 7.2.67.

(viii) One more hypothetical context is evoked in the Mahābhāṣya on P. 7.3.83 jusi ca. This sūtra is meant to account for the substitution of guṇa for u in the derivation of ajuhavuḥ. The relevant part of this derivation is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>hu-lAṉ</th>
<th>3.4.78 tiptasjhi...</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>hu-jaḥa</td>
<td>3.1.68 kartari śap</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hu-ŚaP-ja</td>
<td>2.4.75 juhotyādibhyah śluḥ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hu-Śu-jaḥ</td>
<td>6.1.10 ślau</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hu-hu-jaḥ</td>
<td>1.1.61 pratyayasya lukślulupah</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hu-hu-Jus</td>
<td>3.4.109 sijabhyaśavidibhyāś ca</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>aT-hu-hu-Jus</td>
<td>6.4.71 luṅḷaṅḷrṇkṣvro aḍ udāṭṭaḥ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a-hu-ho-Jus</td>
<td>7.3.83 jusi ca</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a-hu-hav-us</td>
<td>6.1.78 eco 'yavāyāvaḥ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a-ju-hav-us</td>
<td>8.4.54 abhyāse car ca</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>etc.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

888 Mahā-bh III p. 300 l. 21-25 (on P. 7.2.67 vt. 1): yat tarhy ākārāgrahaṇaṁ karoti na hi kaścid akstre dvirvacaṇa ākārānto 'nekā jasi/ nanu cāyaṁ asti daridrāthi/ na daridrēt ātā bhave/vayam/ kim kārāṇam/ uktam etad daridrēte ārdhādhatute lopaḥ siddhaḥ ca pratyayavidhāv iti/ yaś cedāṁnīṁ pratyayavidhau siddhaḥ siddho 'sāv idvidhau/ evam api bhūtapūrvagatī vijñāyate/ ākārānto yo bhūtapūrva iti/.
For reasons that do not concern us at present, Patañjali proposes to read P. 7.3.83 as *ajusi ca and to understand it *śīti from 7.3.75 śṭhivuklamucamāṃ śīti. The problem in this case is that P. 7.3.83 would not then be applicable to forms like *ahuḥavuh, because *hu is not followed by something that has the marker ū at the stage where it is to be replaced by *ho. But at an earlier stage of the derivation *hu was followed by *Ślu, which did have that marker. Patañjali therefore proposes to take into account the notion of what was there before. This then turns out to be in need of some further specification. In the end Patañjali abandons the idea of reading sūtra 7.3.83 in this strange manner, and with it his proposal to take into account the notion of what was there before.889

(ix) One passage remains which, though not actually using the expression bhūtapūrvagati like the preceding ones, appears to refer to the same idea. This passage presents itself in the form of a ślokavārttika under P. 7.1.9 ato bhisa ais, which prescribes the substitution of ais for bhis in the derivation of forms such as vrkṣais, the instrumental plural of vrkṣa ‘tree’. The ślokavārttika concerned reads: ettvam bhisi paratvāc ced ata ais kva bhaviṣyatī/ kṛta ette bhautāpūrvyađais tu nityas tathā satī/. Joshi & Roodbergen (2003: 29) translate this as follows: “If the substitution of *e (for a stem-final a is applied) before bhis (by P. 7.3.103 [bahuvacane jhaly et]) because it is the later rule (in relation to P. 7.1.9), then (the question is) where will ais (by P. 7.1.9) have scope? Even if the substitution of *e has been applied (first, still) ais (can be applied) on account of its coming earlier (than e). This being so, (P. 7.1.9 becomes) nitya ‘invariably applicable’.” Joshi & Roodbergen then explain this passage in the following words (p. 29-30):

[A]t the stage vrkṣa + bhis two rules become applicable simultaneously, namely, P. 7.1.9 (ais in place of bhis) and P. 7.3.103 (e in place of the stem final a). This is a two-way conflict in the sense that whichever rule we apply first, the other rule will be debarred. The point is that P. 7.3.103 is conditioned by a suffix beginning with a jhaL sound (any consonant except a nasal). Once bhis has been replaced by ais, there is no jhaL sound any more. Now, to solve this conflict, suppose we invoke P. 1.4.2 [vīpratīśedhe param kāryam], as is done by tradition. Accordingly, P. 7.3.103 will prevail over P. 7.1.9. The form derived will be vrkṣeñbihih, instead of vrkṣaih. The consequence is that now the substitution of ais is left without scope of application. In other words, P. 7.1.9 will be anavakāśa. Being anavakāśa, it must prevail. That seems to clinch the matter.

In the second line, first pāda, of the Ślokavārttika another solution is offered. The argument turns on what is called bhūtapūrvagati ‘the understanding of something that was there in an earlier stage. ... The something meant here is the stem final a, like in vrkṣa + bhis. We will now assume that even after the application of P. 7.3.103 (vrkṣe + bhis) that stem-final a is still there. Therefore P. 7.1.9 can be applied. But, as stated in the second line, second pāda, this amounts to assuming that P. 7.1.9 has the character of a nitya rule which is to be applied irrespective of any other rule.

---

889 Mahā-bh III p. 335 l. 12-14 (on P. 7.3.83 vt. 1): evam tarhi śīti vartate/ evam api ājuḥavuḥ abibhavur ity atra na prāṇnosi/ bhūtapūrvagatā bhaviṣyatī/ na sidhyati na hy uṣ śidbhūtapūrvah/ uṣ śidbhūtapūrvo nāśiti kṛtvosi yaḥ śidbhūtapūrvas tasmin bhaviṣyatī/ athavā kriyate nyāsa eva/...
Once again, the use of *pūrvabhūtagati* is here completely hypothetical. The main interest of this passage lies in the circumstance that the device of looking backward is here not proposed by Patañjali, but by the author of a *ślokāvṛttika*. Since nothing is known about the authorship of the *ślokāvṛttikas* contained in the *Mahābhāṣya*, it is not easy to evaluate the significance of this fact.

The above analysis of all the passages of the *Mahābhāṣya* that use the expression *bhūtapurva-gati* “notion of what was there before” allows us to conclude with great likelihood that Patañjali never accepts as his own the point of view which permits the use of knowledge of what happened at earlier stages of a derivation. The temptation to do so is nevertheless great, as these discussions show. They also show that Patañjali was aware that such knowledge might be useful to assure the correct development of a derivation. Yet he is against it. On one occasion, as we have seen (iii), he goes to the extent of explicitly criticizing this point of view.

*Knowledge of what follows*

To the extent possible, in Patañjali’s opinion a derivation should only make use of the information that is available at each specific stage. Knowledge of what was there before is, where possible, avoided. The same is true for knowledge about following stages. One does not, in principle, need to know what form is being derived, nor indeed what future stages will have to be passed through, in order to carry out a correct derivation. The rules and meta-rules of grammar will all by themselves lead the derivation to the correct result.

This is Patañjali’s ideal. This ideal is all the more interesting in that Joshi & Kiparsky have recently argued that “lookahead” — i.e., knowledge of future stages of a derivation — is required to obtain correct results. This is not the place to examine Joshi & Kiparsky’s position. I will rather concentrate on some passages where Patañjali’s attempt not to use lookahead is confronted with serious difficulties.

(i) Joshi & Kiparsky draw attention to the fact that the tradition did not manage to avoid lookahead altogether. They specifically cite in this connection Paribhāṣā 64 from Nāgēśa’s *Paribhāṣenduśekhara*, which reads: *upasamjātanimittam apy utsargaḥ bādhate* “An *apavāda* of *upasamjātanimittam* is rendered impossible by *utsargaḥ*” (tr. Kielhorn). This Paribhāṣā is mentioned by Nāgēśa in the context of the discussion of the derivation of *dadhati* “they put”. Joshi & Kiparsky contrast the in their view correct derivation of this word with a wrong one:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Correct derivation</th>
<th>Wrong derivation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>dhā-jhi</td>
<td>dhā-jhi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dhā-ŚaP-jhi</td>
<td>dhā-ŚaP-jhi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dhā-(ślu)-jhi</td>
<td>dhā-ŚaP-anti</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>da-dhā-jhi</td>
<td>dhā-(ślu)-anti</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>da-dhā-ati</td>
<td>da-ḍhā-anti</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>dadhati</em></td>
<td>(other rules)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>dhā-jhi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>dhā-ŚaP-jhi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>dhā-ŚaP-anti</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>dhā-(ślu)-anti</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>da-ḍhā-anti</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>dadhati</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(other rules)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

By the above analysis, Patañjali would be forced to accept derivations which he himself explicitly rejects (though in different passages).
They conclude: “Application of 7.1.3-4 must be deferred until reduplication has taken effect. This crucially requires lookahead.”

Paribhāṣā 64 agrees, and with it at least part of the traditional commentators. This does not however include the Mahābhāṣya. Paribhāṣā 64 does not occur in this text. Nāgeśa attributes it to the ‘modern’ (navīna) grammarians, which means, according to his commentator Pāyaguṇḍa, to [Bhaṭṭoṭi] Dīkṣita etc. The question that interests us at present is: How did the Mahābhāṣya deal with the difficulties connected with the derivation of dadhati?

The Mahābhāṣya does not discuss this derivation. In order to find out what Patañjali thinks about the kind of difficulties that arise in the derivation of dadhati, we must stay a little longer with Nāgeśa to study what more he has to say about it. In dealing with the difficulties, Nāgeśa first introduces two other Paribhāṣās. These read:

Pbh. 62: pūrvaṁ hy apavādā abhiniviśante paścād utsargāḥ
Pbh. 63: prakalpya vāpavādavisayam tata utsargo ‘bhiniviśate

Kielhorn offers the following translation, which is however influenced by Nāgeśa’s specific interpretation:

“Apavādas, it is certain, are considered first (in order to find out where they apply); afterwards the general rules (are made to take effect in all cases to which it has thus been ascertained that the Apavādas do not apply.)”

“Or (we may say that) first all (forms) which fall under the Apavāda are set aside, and that subsequently the general rule is employed (in the formation of the remaining forms).”

The newly created Paribhāṣā 64 is supposedly based upon these two Paribhāṣās.

The statements known as Paribhāṣās 62 and 63 in the Paribhaṣenduśekhara occur a number of times in Patañjali’s Mahābhāṣya, not however as Paribhāṣās but as ordinary sentences. They invariably occur together, and appear to be connected by the word ca rather than vā. The resulting combined sentence is:

pūrvam hy apavādā abhiniviśante paścād utsargāḥ/ prakalpya cāpavādavisayam tata utsargo ‘bhiniviśate/

Joshi & Roodbergen (1981: 43) translate this as follows:

“because special rules become effective first (and) general rules (only) afterwards, and after we have formed an idea of the domain of the special rule the general rule becomes effective”.

Most contexts in which these sentences occur are of no particular interest for us at present, but the following passage is.

891 See Joshi & Roodbergen 1981: 43, fn. 156. Ashok Aklujkar has given a lecture about these two Paribhāṣās at the annual meeting of the American Oriental Society in 2003 (Nashville); he appears to prefer the reading vā.
Under P. 4.1.89 vt. 2 (Mahā-bh II p. 240 l. 24-25) we find, exceptionally, the sentences pūrvaḥ hy apavādā abhiniviṣante paścād utsargāḥ and prakalpya cāpavādaviśayanam tata utsargo 'bhiniviśate separated from each other. The case discussed here is not altogether dissimilar to that of dadhati studied above, as will become clear below. It concerns the derivation of forms like gārgiśyaḥ ‘students of the descendants of Garga’

The general rule here is P. 2.4.64 yaṇaṇoṣ ca, which prescribes luk-elision in the plural of the suffix yaṇ used in the formation of gārgya ‘descendent of Garga’. The plural of gārgya is therefore gargaḥ ‘descendents of Garga’. A difficulty arises in the formation of gārgiṣya ‘student of a descendent of Garga’, with the suffix CHa (= ṭya, by P. 7.1.2) prescribed by P. 4.2.114 vrddhāc chaḥ. As long as one sticks to the singular there is no problem. However, in the formation of gārgiśya ‘students of descendents of Garga’, P. 2.4.64 threatens to take away the suffix yaṇ by luk-elision, leaving gargya instead of gārgya. Garga, unlike gārgya, is not called vrddha (see P. 1.1.73 vrddhir yasyācām ādis tad vrddham), and cannot therefore take the suffix CHa. The situation is supposedly saved by P. 4.1.89 gotre 'lug aci, which prohibits luk-elision before certain suffixes beginning with a vowel, and which is therefore an exception to P. 2.4.64. This gives rise to the following scheme:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Correct derivation</th>
<th>Wrong derivation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>gārgya</td>
<td>gārgya-luk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gārgya-cha</td>
<td>2.4.64 yaṇaṇoṣ ca</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gārgya-ṭya</td>
<td>gargaḥ-luk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gārgya-(aluk)-ṭya</td>
<td>The suffix CHa cannot be added at this point</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gārgya-ṭya</td>
<td>gargaḥ-luk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gārgya</td>
<td>gargaḥ</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If one accepts lookahead, application of 2.4.64 (with its exception 4.1.89) must be deferred until CHa (= ṭya) has been added. This is not however the way in which the Bhāṣyakāra explains the situation. Patañjali offers in fact three ways to deal with this derivation:

(i) By teaching aluk before a taddhita suffix beginning with a vowel, Pāṇini indicates that luk and aluk must apply simultaneously.892
(ii) Aluk takes effect at the point of the derivation where luk applies; in this way the suffix CHa connected with aluk is known.893 Here Patañjali adds: pūrvaḥ hy apavādā abhiniviṣante paścād utsargāḥ.
(iii) Luk waits for aluk to apply; in this way aluk before CHa is established.894 Patañjali adds: prakalpya cāpavādaviśayanam tata utsargo.

If we inspect Patañjali’s words carefully, and take care to avoid reading these words in the light of their interpretation by later commentators, we do not find in them anything resembling lookahead. It is not suggested that we need to know what will

892 Mahā-bh II p. 240 l. 21-22 (on P. 4.1.89 vt. 2): yad ayaṃ bhūmi prāptasya luko ‘jādau taddhita ‘lukam sāstai taj jñāpayati ācārayah samānakālāv etāv aluglukāv iti.
894 Mahā-bh II p. 241 l. 2-3 (on P. 4.1.89 vt. 2): lug vā punar alukaḥ prasaṅgæ yadi pratikṣate tathāśya eche ‘luk Siddho bhavati.
happen later in the derivation, merely that we do not use a rule until the circumstances have arrived that also give scope to its exception. In other words, Patañjali appears to treat this case on a purely step-by-step basis, without lookahead. And yet, a case very similar to this one — the derivation of dadhati — is cited both by Joshi & Kiparsky and by Nägeśa and other late grammarians in support of lookahead.

(ii) Joshi & Kiparsky illustrate the need for lookahead with the help of two examples. The first one is the derivation of seduṣah, the genitive singular of the perfect participle of sad ‘sit’ (nom. sg. sedivān). Since this derivation is not discussed in the Mahābhāṣya, we turn immediately to the second example, the derivation of aupyata “it was sowed”. The correct derivation of this form is:

\[
\begin{align*}
vap-lāṃ & \\
vap-ta & \text{(at this point one must choose 3.1.67)} \\
vap-yaK-ta & 3.1.67 \text{ sārvadhātuke yak} \\
up-ya-ta & 6.1.15 \text{ vacisvapiyajādīnām kiti} \\
a-\text{up-ya-ta} & 6.4.72 \text{ āḍ ajādīnām} \\
aupyata & \text{(other rules)}
\end{align*}
\]

The following derivation is incorrect:

\[
\begin{align*}
vap-lāṃ & \\
vap-ta & \text{(if we choose 6.4.71, the wrong form is derived)} \\
a-vap-ta & 6.4.71 \text{ luṇḍaṅṛṇkṣv āḍ udātaḥ} \\
a-\text{vap-yaK-ta} & 3.1.67 \text{ sārvadhātuke yak} \\
a-\text{up-ya-ta} & 6.1.15 \text{ vacisvapiyajādīnām kiti} \\
*\text{op-ya-ta} & \text{(other rules)}
\end{align*}
\]

In this derivation the augment must “wait” for the correct root form, which does not however present itself until after the affixation of yaK.

Patañjali recognises the problematic nature of the derivation of aupyata and resorts to a slokavārtti that recommends various adjustments of Pāṇini’s grammar so as to make the vrddhi-substitution of a-u possible.\(^{395}\) Interestingly, the Kāśikā under P. 6.4.72 offers a different solution, making use of Paribhāṣā 43 (counted as in Nägeśa’s Paribhāṣenduśēkhara: śabdāntarasya prāpnuvan vidhir anityo bhavati). Patañjali knows and uses this Paribhāṣā, but not in the present context. It is however clear that both solutions for the derivation of aupyata — that of the Mahābhāṣya and that of the Kāśikā — try to propose a way in which the correct form will be obtained without lookahead.

(iii) Consider next the derivations of āyam “they went” and āsān “they were”. Joshi & Kiparsky present these as demonstrating Pāṇini’s awareness of lookahead. This derivation passes through the following steps:

\[
\begin{align*}
i-lāṃ & \\
i-\text{anti} & \\
i-an & \text{(up to this point, the desired augment ā could be derived by 6.4.72 āḍ ajādīnām)}
\end{align*}
\]

\(^{395}\) Mahā-bh III p. 208 l. 17 ff. (on P. 6.4.74).
y-an 6.4.81 iño yan
āyan 6.4.72 āḍ ajādīnām (in virtue of 6.4.22 asiddhavat atrā bhāt)

Joshi & Kiparsky explain:

Before a consonant, 6.4.71 luṇlāṇṛṅkṣv ad udāttaḥ requires a short augment a-. The desired ā could be derived prior to applying 6.4.81, but “lookahead” precludes that. To get ā-, both 6.4.81 and 6.4.72 have been put into a section where all rules are asiddhavat with respect to each other (the ā bhāt section 6.4.22 ff.). Accordingly we “pretend” that the root still begins with a vowel. There was no other reason for putting the rules into that section. This shows that Pāṇini assumed ... lookahead ...

The derivation of āsan is similar:

as-laṅ
as-anti
as-an (up to this point, the desired augment ā could be derived by 6.4.72 āḍ ajādīnām)
s-an 6.4.111 śnasor allopaḥ
āsan 6.4.72 āḍ ajādīnām (in virtue of 6.4.22 asiddhavat atrā bhāt)

These two derivations are referred to several times in the Mahābhāṣya. Under P. 6.4.22 asiddhavat atrā bhāt Patañjali rejects the notion that one purpose of this sūtra is to allow the formation of āsan (as maintained by Joshi & Kiparsky, as we have seen). On the contrary, according to Patañjali, Pāṇini’s grammar contains an indication that shows that prefixing ā is stronger than dropping a, and therefore takes place before the latter spoils the derivation. No lookahead is required if we accept Patañjali’s solution. The same applies to the other ‘solutions’ which he offers in this context to account for āsan, āyan and other forms. In other words, Patañjali has found a way to avoid Joshi & Kiparsky’s conclusion to the extent that the derivations of āyan and āsan show Pāṇini’s awareness of lookahead.

(iv) Patañjali is less successful in warding off lookahead under sūtra 4.1.90 yūni luk. A problem arises in the derivation of phañṭāḥṛtāḥ ‘students of the yuwan-descendent of Phañṭāhrī’. Phañṭāhrī is himself the (gotra-)descendent of Phañṭāhrta, but this is less important in the present context. The yuwan-descendent of Phañṭāhrī is also called

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896 Mahā-bh I p. 143 l. 19 ff. (on P. 1.1.57); III p. 188 l. 5 ff. (on P. 6.4.22 vt. 5); III p. 209 l. 10 ff. (on P. 6.4.74 vt. 2).
898 “[T]he word [yuwan] is given as a technical term in grammar in the sense of one, who is the son of the grandson or his descendant, provided his father is alive; the term is also applied to a nephew, brother, or a paternal relative of the grandson or his descendant, provided his elder brother, if not his father, is alive; it is also applied to the grandson, in case respect is to be shown to him; cf. P. 4.1.163-167.” (Abhyankar & Shukla 1977: 317 s.v. yuwan).
899 “The word [gotra] is used by Pāṇini in the technical sense of a descendant except the son or a daughter; cf. ... P. 4.1.162.” (Abhyankar & Shukla 1977: 144 s.v. gotra).
Phāṇṭārta, formed with the suffix śa by P. 4.1.150 phāṇṭāṛtimatābhyaṁ ṇaphiṇau. The students of this last Phāṇṭārta are called phāṇṭāṛtāh; this word is formed through the luk-elision of śa (by P. 4.1.90 yūni luk), and the subsequent adding of aN (by P. īnas ca). The derivation unites in this way the following elements:

phāṇṭāṛtī-(luk of śa)-aN

The difficulty is that luk of śa takes place because a prāgdīvya suffix beginning with a vowel follows (anuvṛtti of aci in 4.1.90 from the preceding rule). But the specific suffix aN — which does begin with a vowel — is conditioned by the fact that it is added to a stem in iN, which is not the case until śa has been elided. Patañjali solve this problem?

Patañjali proposes the following solution. The locative aci in 4.1.90 yūni luk (aci) is not a locative which makes known that a suffix beginning with a vowel (ac) follows (it is not a parasaptami); it is rather a visayasaptami, which means something like ‘locative of scope’. When a suffix beginning with a vowel is the scope and luk-elision has been carried out, the suffix that obtains should be added.

Patañjali does not clearly say what he means by all this. At first sight it would seem that here he does consider that later stages of the derivation have to be taken into account during an earlier one. In other words, it would seem that in this case Patañjali, perhaps under duress, accepts and uses lookahead.

Before we draw this conclusion it will be wise to see how Patañjali uses the expression visayasaptami elsewhere in his Mahābhāṣya. He does so on three other occasions. On one of those, the ‘locative of scope’ is the locative of the one word of P. 2.4.35 ārdhadhātuke. If this had been a parasaptami, there would be a difficulty in the derivation of bhavyam, which would become bhāvyam instead. The crucial step is the substitution of bhū for as by P. 2.4.52 in which ārdhadhātuke is still valid from P. 2.4.35. This difficulty has been explained in detail by Joshi & Roodbergen (2000: 60-61), whom I quote here:

[On the parasaptami alternative], instead of bhavyam we would derive bhāvyam as follows:

<p>| | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(1) as-</td>
<td>+ ṇyaT</td>
<td>P. 3.1.124</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2) bhā-</td>
<td>+ ya</td>
<td>P. 2.4.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(3) bhau</td>
<td>+ ya</td>
<td>P. 7.2.115</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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900 Here we seem to be confronted with a case of circularity (or mutual dependence) which is not altogether dissimilar to what we found above in connection with the introduction of pratyāhāras. The consequences of this for the ‘extended siddha-principle’ cannot here be explored.

901 Mahābhāṣya II p. 242 l. 21-23 (on P. 4.1.90 vt. 2); acitī naiśa parasaptamī kā tari/ visayasaptamī ajādau visayāiti/ tatrācī visaye luki kṛte yo yataḥ pratyayaḥ prājnoti sa tato bhaviṣyati/.

902 This would agree with Joshi & Roodbergen 1971: transl. p. 3 fn. 1: “Patañjali often raises the question whether a particular locative is visayasaptami or parasaptami. The difference is that in the first case the grammatical operation is applied even if the environmental factor is not present in the first stage of the prakriyā, but is added only afterwards. ... So visayasaptami means: first apply the rule, then add the environmental element, ...” Note that Patañjali uses the expression visayasaptami only four times in his Mahābhāṣya.
(4) bhāv  + ya  P. 6.1.79
(5) (bhāv  + ya)  + sU  P. 4.1.2
(6) (bhāv  + ya)  + am  P. 7.1.24
(7) bhāv  + yam  P. 6.1.107

bhāvyam.

The point is that in this derivation the ārdhadhātuka suffix Nyāt is added immediately in the first stage of the derivation. This is possible, because by P. 3.1.124 Nyāt must be added after a verbal base ending in a consonant, in our case, the s of as-.

On the other hand, the assumption that ārdhadhātuke is a viṣayasaptamī leads to the desired result, as follows:

B.  
(1) as-  
(2) bhū-  P. 2.4.52
(3) bhū  + yaT  P. 3.1.97
(4) bho  + ya  P. 7.3.84
(5) bhav  + ya  P. 6.1.78
(6) (bhav  + ya)  + sU  P. 4.1.2
(7) (bhav  + ya)  + am  P. 7.1.24
(8) bhav  + yam  P. 6.1.107

bhāvyam.

Here the point is that the verbal base substitution takes place before the ārdhadhātuka suffix is actually added. Now Nyāt cannot be added in the second stage of the prakriyā, because bhū- does not end in a consonant. On the other hand, the suffix yaT is added by P. 3.1.97. This rule says that yaT is to be added after a verbal base ending in a vowel.

In the then following pages Joshi & Roodbergen give a detailed analysis of the vārttikas and Bhāsy on P. 2.4.35. They conclude (p. 64): “Apparently, Kātyāyana is convinced that ārdhadhātuke is a parasaptamī. That is why he proposes to change the rule. The idea of viṣayasaptamī seems not to be known to Kātyāyana, or at least not under that name. ... Patañjali, on the other hand, is acquainted with viṣayasaptamī ...”

Joshi & Roodbergen then explain in more detail what the viṣayasaptamī position is believed to accomplish in the Mahābhāṣya passage under consideration (p. 64-65):

Let us return to the difficulty to remove which Kātyāyana wants to rephrase the rule and Patañjali has recourse to viṣayasaptamī. The difficulty arises in the derivation of bhāvyā stated under ... A, above, which requires the substitution of bhū- for as-. By P. 1.1.56 bhū- is considered sthānīvat ‘like the original’, except when a grammatical operation is conditioned by a speech sound. The addition of the ārdhadhātuka suffixes Nyāt and yaT is conditioned by a speech sound, namely, a consonant and a vowel occurring in final position of the verbal base respectively. Since in this respect bhū- is not sthānīvat and since it ends in a vowel, we can only add yaT by P. 3.1.97. This gives us the desired form, namely, bhāvyā. But the difficulty starts with the parasaptamī interpretation of
ārdhādhatuke. This requires the presence of an ārdhādhatuka suffix before as- can be replaced by bhū-. Since as- ends in a consonant, this suffix can only be NyaT, by P. 3.1.124. Consequently, we derive the form bhāvya, which is not the desired form.

The visayasaptamī interpretation of ārdhādhatuke intends to remove this difficulty by taking into account the ārdhādhatuka suffix required at a later stage in the derivation, namely, the suffix yaT. Thereby the introduction of a specifier ārdhādhatuka suffix in the first stage of the prakriyā is postponed. In other words, taking into account the change or changes required at a later stage, in our case, the ajanta quality of the verbal base, the visayasaptamī interpretation maintains that for the replacement of as- by bhū- the mere assumption of an ārdhādhatuka suffix is sufficient. Only later on, after the replacement of as- by bhū- has taken place, the ārdhādhatuka suffix is specified.

Joshi & Roodbergen’s formulation is somewhat confusing, because it contains expressions suggesting lookahead (“taking into account the ārdhādhatuka suffix required at a later stage in the derivation, namely, the suffix yaT”) beside others that don’t (“the visayasaptamī interpretation maintains that for the replacement of as- by bhū- the mere assumption of an ārdhādhatuka suffix is sufficient”). Patañjali’s precise formulation does not allow us to decide with certainty whether he here accepts lookahead or not. (Mahā-bh I p. 484 l. 6-7 (on P. 2.4.35 vt. 5): asati paurvāparye visayasaptamī vijñāyate/ ārdhādhatukaviṣaya iti/ tatrārdhādhatukaviṣaye jagdhyādiṣu kṛteṣu yo yataḥ prāṇnoti pratīyāh sa tato bhāvīyatī/ It is however clear that an interpretation of his words is possible in which lookahead is not required: the mere assumption of an ārdhādhatuka suffix is responsible for the substitution of bhū- for as-; the precise form of the ārdhādhatuka suffix is determined subsequently.

A similar reasoning can be applied to the third passage where Patañjali uses the expression visayasaptamī. It here concerns the word ārdhādhatuke in P. 3.1.31 āyādaya ārdhādhatuke vā.903

Perhaps Patañjali’s most revealing use of the term visayasaptamī occurs under P. 3.1.26 hetumati ca. Here the question is raised whether the locative hetumati qualifies the meaning of the suffix to be added (Nic) or the meaning of the stem, i.e. the verbal root, to which it is to be added. The preliminary position is that, as a locative, it should qualify the meaning of the suffix; if it qualified the meaning of the stem, an ablative would have been required.904 Patañjali rejects this argument in the following words:905

“This is not the case. For here (in this grammar) visayasaptamīs, too, are [used]. For example, [one can say:] ‘a nominal stem that expresses measure (pramāṇe)’;

903 Mahā-bh II p. 41 l. 17-19 (on P. 3.1.31 vt. 4): ārdhādhatuka iti naisā parasaptamī kā tarhi/ visayasaptamī/ ārdhādhatukaviṣaya iti/ tatrārdhādhatukaviṣaya āyādiṇprakṛter āyādiṣu kṛteṣu yo yataḥ pratīyāh prāṇnoti sa tato bhāvīyatī/.
904 Mahā-bh II p. 31 l. 7-10 (on P. 3.1.26): katham idam vijñāyate/ hetumati abhidhaye niḥ bhavaṭṭī/ āhovid dheṇumaya niḥ dātur varatata iti/ yuktam punar idam vicārayitum/ nanv anenaśāmāṃdghena pratyayārthavīṣaṇena bhavatīcam yāvāt āhetumāty ucyate/ yadi hi prakṛtyarthavīśaṇam sāyāḥ dhetumata ity evam brūyāt/.
905 Mahā-bh II p. 31 l. 10-12 (on P. 3.1.26): naitad astī/ bhavaṭṭānaḥ hi visayasaptamṣo ’pi/ tad yathā/ pramāṇe yat prātipadikam vartate striyām yat prātipadikam vartata iti/ evam ihāpi hetumaty abhidhaye niḥ bhavaṭī hetumāty yo dātur varatata iti jāyate vicāranā/.
‘a nominal stem that denotes a woman (striyām)’. In the same way also here (in this grammar) [one can say: ] ‘when the meaning hetumat is to be expressed, there is [the suffix] Nic, ‘a verbal root that is expressive of [the meaning] hetumat’. This is why a doubt arises.”

In this passage Patañjali uses the expression viṣayasaptamī in order to refer to meaning conditions expressed by the locative. But if this is what the expression means here, its meaning in the three remaining cases where it is used cannot be very different.

On two occasions the Mahābhāṣya paraphrases a sūtra word in the locative by adding viṣaye. The word samjñāyām in P. 5.2.23 is paraphrased as samjñāyām viṣaye (Mahā-bh II p. 375 l. 4). In view of the preceding passage this may be understood to mean “when a samjñā is to be expressed”, or more generally “when it concerns a samjñā”. However, there is a subtle difference between the locative hetumati in P. 3.1.26 and samjñāyām in P. 5.2.23 and many other sūtras. The meaning hetumat belongs to the verbal root to which a suffix will be added; Patañjali specifies this quite clearly, saying: hetumati yo dhātur vartate. The term samjñāyām, on the other hand, does not apply to the stem, but to the result of combining stem with suffix. This is the reason why Patañjali makes a general statement about the way samjñāyām in sūtras is to be understood: “In the [rules] which are prescribed samjñāyām, [this term] is not understood as samjñāyām abhidheyyāyām ‘when a samjñā is to be expressed’, but rather as follows: ‘if by [the stem] ending in the suffix a samjñā is understood’.” In spite of initial appearances to the contrary, this passage does say that samjñāyām means “when a samjñā is to be expressed” (but not by the stem alone, of course), and this is clearly presented as equivalent to samjñāyām viṣaye. The paraphrase chandasi viṣaye (Mahā-bh II p. 64 l. 19) for the word chandasi understood in P. 3.1.85 (from 84) clearly means: “when it concerns Vedic usage”.

Elsewhere in his Mahābhāṣya Patañjali speaks of the three kinds of location (adhikaraṇa), which is what is primarily expressed by the locative. Location, he states there, can be covering (vyāpaka), touching (aupaśleṣika), or viṣayika. The term vaiṣayika is derived from viṣaya. The third kind of location therefore concerns the viṣaya, the scope. It is however interesting to note that Patañjali, in presenting these three kinds of location, evidently talks about the non-technical use of the locative. Patañjali’s use of the expression viṣayasaptamī, too, may therefore refer to a non-technical use of the locative. Such a non-technical use of the locative — which can often be translated in English with the help of some such term as ‘concerning’ — is indeed well-known and frequently used in Sanskrit.

In view of these considerations, we may conclude that the word ārdhadhātūke in sūtras 2.4.35 and 3.1.31, being a viṣayasaptamī, means, in Patañjali’s opinion, something like “when it concerns an ārdhadhātuka [suffix]”. A meaning condition, too, can be

906 I propose no translation for the difficult term samjñā, but refer to Candotti (2006) for a detailed discussion.
907 Mahā-bh II p. 68 l. 2-4 (on P. 3.1.112 vt. 3): athāvā ya ete samjñāyām vidhiyante teṣu naivam vijñāyate samjñāyām abhidheyāyām iti/ kim tariḥ/ pratayāntena cet samjñā gamyata iti/.
908 Candotti (see above) draws attention to a passage in the Kāśikā on P. 5.1.62 which shows that this much later commentary clearly distinguishes between abhidheyasaptamī and viṣayasaptamī: abhidheyasaptamī esā, na viṣayasaptamī.
909 Mahā-bh III p. 51 l. 8-9: adhikaraṇaṁ nāma triprakāraṁ vyāpakam aupaśleṣikāṁ vaiṣayikam iti.
expressed with the help of a *viśayasaptamī*, because here, too, that particular non-technical use of the locative is involved. If our analysis of Patañjali’s understanding of the term *viśayasaptamī* is correct, this term is not used to indicate that this or that grammatical element will appear later on in the derivation. Patañjali rather falls back on this ordinary use of the locative where the technical grammatical interpretation of this case (the *parasaptamī*) confronts him with insuperable difficulties. This technical grammatical use of the locative confronts him with insuperable difficulties in certain cases, precisely because he insists that the following element has to be there at the moment the next step is taken. For those who accept that lookahead is an essential part of Pāṇini’s grammar, no such requirement can be made.

It is open to question whether Patañjali’s trick to return to the ordinary use of the locative solves his problems. More recent grammarians in the Pāṇiniyan tradition treat the *viśayasaptamī* itself as something like a technical term, which is used when lookahead seems unavoidable to them. It is difficult to state with confidence what Patañjali may have thought about these for him difficult cases. It is, however, certain that he does not explicitly admit that lookahead is needed, even here. He suggests that the ordinary use of the locative, rather than its technical grammatical use, will do the job. We have seen that it doesn’t.\(^{910}\)

(v) In four passages Patañjali introduces the notion of ‘future designation’ (*bhāvinī samjñāṇā*) in order to deal with difficulties similar to the ones which he resolves with the help of a *viśayasaptamī*. All these passages contain the following comparison:\(^{911}\)

Take an example: Someone says to some weaver: “weave a cloth out of this thread”. He (i.e., the weaver) thinks: if it is (already) a cloth, it is not (still) to be woven. But if it is (still) to be woven, it is not a cloth. (To say,) it is (still) to be woven and it is a cloth becomes contradictory. Certainly, what he means is a designation (viz., ‘cloth’) yet to come (*bhāvinī samjñāṇā*). That, I think, is to be woven, which, when, becomes the (thing called) cloth.\(^{912}\)

\(^{910}\) J. A. F. Roodbergen (1991, esp. p. 310 ff.) argues that *sārvadbhūte* in P. 1.3.67 may have been meant as a *viśayasaptamī* by Pāṇini. Perhaps one should say that Patañjali does not use this expression in this context because he had more successfully succeeded in forcing the cases covered by this sūtra into his preferred scheme of derivations.

\(^{911}\) Mahā-bh I p. 112 l. 10-13 (on P. 1.1.45 vt. 3); I p. 275 l. 6-8 (on P. 1.3.12 vt. 2); I p. 394 l. 13-16 (on P. 2.1.51 vt. 4); II p. 113 l. 18-21 (on P. 3.2.102 vt. 2): *tad yatād/ kaścit kacit tantuṣvāyaṃ āha/ asya sūtraṣya śātakaṃ vayetiva/ sa paśyati yadi śātaka na vātvayo ’tha vātvayo na śātakah śātaka vātvayaś ceti viprātīddham/ bhāvinī khalv asya samjñābhīpṛetā sa manye vātvayo yasmīn uṣṭe śātaka ity etad bhavaṭṭitē*. Tr. Joshi & Roodbergen 1971: 35-36.

\(^{912}\) Statements like this (“weave a cloth”, “make a pot”, etc.) occupied the minds of practically all philosophers of the early centuries of the Common Era, and led them to adopt various ontological and other positions, such as *satkāryavāda*, *sānyavāda*, *ajātivāda*, *anekāntavāda*, etc. (see below, § III.4.2). The fact that Patañjali is clearly untouched by the presupposition (the ‘correspondence principle’) that underlies all those philosophical discussions pleads for an early date of Patañjali, before this shared presupposition managed to take hold of all thinkers: Brahmanical, Buddhist and Jaina (and including Bhartrhari).
This example is meant to illustrate Patañjali's position according to which it is common, and therefore justified, to use a designation before it becomes applicable. This is supposed to avoid difficulties, as in the following case.  

The Mahābhāṣya discusses under P. 2.1.51 the possibility of formulating a rule of the form dvigusamjñā prayayottarapadayoḥ “The designation dvigu is conditioned by the presence of a (taddhita-) suffix or of a final member”. Both a ṛṛtika and Patañjali’s commentary agree that this might result in mutual dependence: the addition of the taddhita-suffix or of the final member is conditioned by the designation dvigu, and the designation dvigu is conditioned by the taddhita-suffix of the final member.  

A subsequent ṛṛtika (no. 4) claims that the problem has been resolved, but does not tell us how. Patañjali makes some suggestions, among them the one in which the comparison with the weaver plays a central role. It states that the designation dvigu is formed, “when that follows to which [later on], when it has resulted, the designations pratayaya ‘suffix’ and uttaraṇapada ‘final member’ apply”.  

Kaiyāṭa, followed by Joshi & Roodbergen, explains that the Bhāṣya means to say that the form pratayayottarapadayah is a viśyasaptami. This is however open to question. Patañjali’s formulation clearly indicates that the suffix or final member are in place at the time when the designation dvigu is formed. Only the designation pratayaya or uttaraṇapada will be applied later. The example of the weaver presumably shows that no lookahead is required for this postponed designating.  

One may wonder whether the solution of a ‘future designation’ is very convincing in this case. Patañjali himself may not have thought so, for he immediately turns to another solution of the problems surrounding P. 2.1.51, in which Pāṇini’s own formulation (with taddhitārtha-) is then shown to be acceptable. The ‘future designation’ plays a role in the middle of the debate, but appears to be ultimately abandoned.  

Something similar can be said about two of the remaining three passages that invoke the comparison with the weaver (on P. 1.1.45 vt. 3 and on P. 1.3.12 vt. 2).  

The last passage that makes use of the expression bhāviṇī samjñā occurs under P. 3.2.102. Here, too, there is a problem of mutual dependence: the technical term niṣṭhā must apply to the suffixes Ktav and KavatU that are already there (by P. 1.1.26 kta u tva niṣṭhā), and these same two suffixes are brought into existence by the technical term niṣṭhā (by P. 3.2.102 niṣṭhā [bhute]). Patañjali proposes as solution to look upon the term niṣṭhā as a “future designation” (bhāviṇī samjñā): “Those two [suffixes] are used to express the past which, after having come into existence, will [later on] obtain the technical designation niṣṭhā.” Here, as elsewhere, one may wonder whether this circularity would have disturbed Pāṇini, or indeed whether this is really a case of

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914 Once again we are confronted with the question whether perhaps Pāṇini was not disturbed by this kind of circularity; see above.  
917 Mahā-bh II p. 113 l. 3-4: satōh kta tva vah saṃjñayā bhavita vyaṃ saṃjñayā ca kta tva bhāvyet eva ita eva ita eva bhavati.  
918 Mahā-bh II p. 113 l. 21-22: τοῦ βήτου κάλε bhavato yavay abhinirṛttayor niṣṭheti eṣā saṃjñā bhaviṣyati.
circularity.\textsuperscript{919} It is, however, clear that Patañjali was disturbed by this presumed case of circularity, and that he was determined to get rid of it, by hook or by crook.

\textit{Knowledge of the final outcome}

At this point we must consider passages where Patañjali appears to opt for influence of the form to be derived on the shape of the derivation to be chosen.\textsuperscript{920} I am referring to the passages where he interprets the word \textit{para} in P. 1.4.2 \textit{vīpratiṣedhe param kāryam} to mean \textit{iṣṭa} ‘desired’. In other words, at a stage of a derivation where two rules are in conflict, the operation that is desired must be carried out. The situation has been presented by Franz Kielhorn in the following manner (1887a: 129):

In 1.4.2 Pāṇini prescribes that of two conflicting rules the subsequent (\textit{para}) rule, in the order of the \textit{Aṣṭādhyāyī}, shall take effect in preference to the preceding rule. Now Kātyāyana on various occasions shows that Pāṇini’s rule is not universally true, and he points out a number of \textit{pūrva-vīpratiṣedhas}, i.e. instances in which the preceding rule must take effect in preference to the subsequent rule. According to Patañjali, on the other hand, the special rules given by Kātyāyana are unnecessary, and the objections of that grammarian only show that he has not fully understood the word \textit{para} in P. 1.4.2. \textit{Para}, amongst other things, also means ‘desired’ (\textit{iṣṭa}), and what Pāṇini really teaches is, that of two conflicting rules it is the \textit{desired} rule that should take effect ...

What is a desired rule? Kielhorn proposes the following explanation: “i.e. that rule, whatever be its position in the \textit{Aṣṭādhyāyī}, the application of which will lead to correct words”. He then adds his comments: “Here ..., then, we ought to possess a perfect knowledge of the language, if we would rightly apply the rules of Pāṇini’s grammar.”\textsuperscript{921}

It is to be noted that Kielhorn’s comments go well beyond what Patañjali explicitly states. According to Patañjali, in a number of situations the desired rule should take effect. He does not say by whom that rule is desired. Kielhorn concludes that it is the rule desired by the grammarian who desires to arrive at correct forms, but that is neither stated nor even suggested by Patañjali. It is much more in keeping with Patañjali’s general approach to understand these remarks differently. The desired rule is the rule desired by Pāṇini. How do we know which is the rule desired by Pāṇini? From tradition. And how do we know which is the traditional position with regard to these specific derivations? By asking Patañjali.

Patañjali is never shy to impose the view which he considers traditional to solve otherwise irresolvable problems. This is most clearly the case where he cites the phrase \textit{vyākhyānato viśeṣapratipattir na hi samdehād alakṣaṇam}. This is Paribhāṣā 1 in a number of treatises on Paribhāṣās, including Nāgēśa’s \textit{Paribhāṣenduśekhara};\textsuperscript{922} but it is first of all a Paribhāṣā that Patañjali frequently cites in his \textit{Mahābhāṣya}. It means, in Kielhorn’s translation (1874: 2): “The precise (meaning of an ambiguous term) is

\textsuperscript{919} See Scharfe 1961: 90.
\textsuperscript{920} See also Scharf 2013.
\textsuperscript{921} Similarly Cardona 1970: 61.
\textsuperscript{922} Not in all, as Brill (2013) points out in her dissertation.
ascertained from interpretation, for (a rule), even though it contain an ambiguous term, must nevertheless teach (something definite).” The ‘interpretation’ in Kielhorn’s rendering, which translates the Sanskrit vyākhyāna, is the traditional explanation, not just any explanation which a reader might feel like applying.\footnote{Patañjali explains his understanding of the word vyākhyāna in the following passage (Mahā-bh I p. 11 l. 20-23; on Paspaśāhnikā vt. 11): na hi sūtra eva śabdān pratipadyante/ kim tarhi/ vyākhyānataś ca/ nanu ca tad eva sūtraṃ vigṛhitam vyākhyānam bhavati/ na kevalāni carrcāpadāni vyākhyānam vṛddhiḥ āt aij ātī/ kim tarhi/ udāharaṇam pratvādāharaṇam vākyādhyāhāra ity etat samuditaṃ vyākhyānam bhavati/ “... the words are not just known from sūtra ‘the rules’. Then how (do we know them)? From vyākhyāna ‘explanation’ also. But isn’t it true that this very sūtra ‘(body of) rules’, when divided up (into its constituent words) becomes the vyākhyāna ‘explanation’? The mere (separate) words resulting from carrcā ‘(the process of) repeating (the words of a given text)’, as vṛddhi, āt, aic do not constitute vyākhyāna ‘explanation’. Then (in) what (does vyākhyāna consist)? (In) udāharaṇa ‘example’, pratvādāharaṇa ‘counterexample’, (and) vākyādhyāhāra ‘completion of the utterance (by supplying words)’. All of that taken together becomes the vyākhyāna ‘explanation’.” (tr. Joshi & Roodbergen 1986: 161-163.)}

Readers of Nāgêśa's Paribhāṣenduśekhara will remember that the Jīnāpaka of the Paribhāṣa vyākhyānato viśeṣapratipattir na hi samdehād alakṣaṇam is the double use of the marker N in the Śivasūtras. Without explanation this double use can only give rise to confusion, because the precise meaning of the pratyāhāra sN and iN will be ambiguous. Pāṇini — according to Patañjali — has introduced this ambiguity in order to make clear to the users of the grammar that in case of doubt they depend on the traditional explanation. In this particular case they are informed that the pratyāhāra iN is to be understood with the second marker N, whereas aN must be understood with the first marker N except in the case of sūtra 1.1.69 aṇudit savarṇasya cāpratyayāḥ. For our purposes it is important to note that Patañjali does not reconstruct, on the basis of the desired outcome, what aN and iN should mean. Quite the contrary, he authoritatively provides the traditional interpretation of these two expressions, an interpretation which, as he suggests, comes directly from Pāṇini. In other words, the desired outcome of a derivation does not determine for Patañjali how a rule should be understood, neither here nor anywhere else.

Let us now return to Patañjali's proposed interpretation of para in P. 1.4.2 vipratiśedhe param kāryam. In certain cases, he maintains, para means īṣṭa ‘desired’. In view of Patañjali’s general approach toward derivations, this cannot but mean that the choice of one rule at the expense of another that applies at the same time is desired by Pāṇini, and has nothing to do with the readers judgement as to what is the correct outcome.\footnote{Cardona (1976: 191) understands Patañjali in the same way as Kielhorn, but disagrees with the former.} When, therefore, Kielhorn states that that rule is desired, whatever be its position in the Aṣṭādhyāyī, the application of which will lead to correct words, he expresses a truism. But when he adds that we ought to possess a perfect knowledge of the language, if we would rightly apply the rules of Pāṇini’s grammar, he is mistaken. We do not need to know the correct outcome of a derivation in order to correctly apply the rules of Pāṇini’s grammar. On the contrary, we arrive at the correct outcome if we strictly follow his rules, along with the traditional explanation that comes along with them. This traditional explanation contains information as to which rules will have preference in specific situations.
Consider next a few passages where Patañjali uses the device of interpreting para in the sense of īṣṭa ‘desired’. A whole series of examples occurs under P. 7.1.95-96 vt. 10. We will consider two of these.

(i) The correct derivation of jatune, dative singular of the neuter word jatu ‘lac’, is essentially as follows:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{jatu-Ne} & & 4.1.2 \text{svaujas}^° \\
\text{jatu-nUM-e} & & 7.1.73 \text{iko 'ci vibhaktau} \\
\text{jatune} & &
\end{align*}
\]

The problem is that at the first stage another rule — 7.3.111 gher ņiti — is applicable, which would substitute the ěnu vowel o for u of jatu. What is worse, 7.3.111 being para with regard to 7.1.73, it should have priority over the latter. To avoid this, P. 7.1.95-96 vt. 10 (gunavrddhyauttvatrjvadbhāvebhyo num pūrvavipraṭisiddham) states that in this particular case the earlier rule has precedence. Patañjali is not of the opinion that such a special statement is necessary, for para here means īṣṭa.\(^{925}\)

(ii) A similar problem arises in the formation of atisakhīni. Here the correct derivation

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{atisakhi-Jaś} & & 4.1.2 \text{svaujas}^° \\
\text{atisakhi-Śi} & & 7.1.20 \text{jaśsasōḥ śiḥ} \text{ (and } 1.1.42 \text{ śi sarvanāmasthānam)} \\
\text{atisakhi-nUM-i} & & 7.1.72 \text{napumsakasya jhalacah} \\
\text{atisakhī-n-i} & & 6.4.8 \text{ sarvanāmasthāne cāśambuddha}
\end{align*}
\]

is jeopardised by sūtras 7.1.92 sakhyur asambuddha and 7.2.115 aco ņīniti, which would substitute vrddhi (= aī) for final i of atisakhi, instead of the addition of nUM. Once again the earlier rule has precedence according to Patañjali because para means īṣṭa.\(^{926}\)

The same vārttika covers a number of further cases, all of which can be explained, Patañjali maintains, by understanding the word para in the sense īṣṭa. Patañjali cites this vārttika in advance under P. 1.4.2 vipraṭisēdhe paraṃ kāryam, and proclaims there already his view that in these cases the word para expresses the meaning īṣṭa (Mahā-bh I p. 306 l. 1-10; on P. 1.4.2. vt. 7).

Another example is the following. In the derivation of vāvṛte from the root vṛt a dilemma presents itself. The relevant part of the derivation has the following shape:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{vṛt - II} & & 3.2.115 \text{ parokṣe liṭ} \\
vṛt-vṛt-\text{II} & & 6.1.8 \text{ liṭi dhātor anabhyāsasya} \\
vṛ-vṛt-\text{II} & & 7.4.60 \text{ ḫalādiḥ śeṣah} \\
va-vṛt-\text{II} & & 7.4.66 \text{ ur at} \\
va-vṛt-ta & & 3.4.78 \text{ tīptasjiḥ} \\
va-vṛt-eŚ & & 3.4.81 \text{ liṭas tajhayor eśirec}
\end{align*}
\]


\(^{926}\) Mahā-bh III p. 275 l. 26 – p. 276 l. 1: vrddher avakāsah/ sakhāyaḥ sakhāyaḥ/ numah sa eva (i.e., trapuṇi jatuni, JB)/ ihobhayaṃ prāṃnoti/ atisakhīni brāhmaṇaṃkulaṃtii// ... etc.
At this point two rules apply. P. 1.2.5 asamyogāl liṭ kit stipulates that the substitute for \( \text{II}T \), i.e. \( e^S \), has the marker \( K \), which prevents substitution of \( \text{guna} \) or \( \text{vṛddhi} \) in \( vṛt \) by P. 1.1.5 knīti ca. On the other hand there is 7.3.86 pugantalabhūpadhasya ca, which prescribes substitution of \( \text{guna} \) for the vowel of \( vṛt \). Patañjali on P. 1.2.5 points out that 1.2.5 is no exception (apavāda) to 7.3.86. The two rules therefore simultaneously, and contradict each other. If one applies in this situation P. 1.4.2 vipratiṣedhe param kāryam, one would have to prefer 7.3.86 pugantalabhūpadhasya ca which occurs later in the Aṣṭādhyāyī and arrive at an incorrect form *vavṛte. In this situation Patañjali states that \( \text{para} \) means īśa ‘desired’. The desired rule in the situation is 1.2.5 asamyogāl liṭ kit, which leads to the correct form vavṛte.\(^\text{927}\)

It is not necessary to consider all the passages where Patañjali uses this specific device. Sometimes it occurs in the middle of a debate in which it only plays a provisional role.\(^\text{928}\) The main conclusion to be drawn is that Patañjali never explicitly states that we, the users of the grammar, are free to give precedence to the sūtra which we prefer. The ‘desired’ rule which has to be used in an ambiguous situation is the rule desired by Pāṇini, or perhaps one should say: by the tradition. This means that neither we nor indeed anyone else need to know which is the correct form to be attained at the end of the derivation. We simply must use, at each junction, the rule which is to be preferred, either because of some principle underlying Pāṇini’s grammar, or because we know that that is the rule ‘desired’ by Pāṇini. The outcome will automatically be correct, and we do not need to worry about it.

Complications ignored

Patañjali does not always admit that the issue of linearity is open and can give rise to major complications. At times he proceeds as if the issue is resolved and a particular order is presupposed. An example is his mention of the forms pradīvya and prasīvya in his discussion of P. 1.1.56 sthānivad ādeśo ‘nalvidhau. The correct derivation of these two forms, Patañjali claims, depends on the correct interpretation of that sūtra.\(^\text{929}\) The correct derivation of prasīvya is as follows:\(^\text{930}\)

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{pra-sīv-}Ktvā & \quad 3.4.21 \text{samānakartṛkayoḥ pūrvakāle} \\
\text{pra-sīv-}LyaP & \quad 7.1.37 \text{samāse ‘naṅpūrve kṛto lyap} \\
\text{pra-sīv-}ya & \quad 8.2.77 \text{hali ca} \\
\text{prasīvya} & \\
\end{align*}
\]

Patañjali’s concern is that sthānivadbhāva might treat the substitute \( \text{LyaP} \) like its substituend \( \text{Ktvā} \), so that \( \text{IT} \) might then be prefixed to it by 7.2.35 ārdhadhātukasyaḥ.

\(^\text{927}\) Mahā-bh I p. 194 l. 14-16, on P. 1.2.5 vt. 2: ihobhayam prāpnoti/ vavṛte vavṛdhe/ paratvād gunah prāpnoti// idam tarhy uktam iṣṭavāc paraśabdo vipratiṣedhe paraṃ yad iṣṭam tad bhavatiṅ/.

\(^\text{928}\) The remaining passages are: Mahā-bh I p. 46 l. 14; p. 404 l. 26; II p. 237 l. 16; p. 279 l. 3-4; p. 337 l. 20; III p. 18 l. 1; p. 99 l. 12; p. 134 l. 16-17; p. 201 l. 5; p. 238 l. 10.

\(^\text{929}\) Mahā-bh I p. 133 l. 13 f. (on P. 1.1.56).

\(^\text{930}\) See Joshi & Roodbergen 1990: transl. p. 22 n. 89.
valādeḥ. The sūtra prescribes prefixing of iT to an ārdhadhātuka suffix beginning with \(val\), i.e. with any consonant except \(y\). The interpretation Patañjali proposes for P. 1.1.56 is meant to avoid this difficulty.

Patañjali does not mention that the same difficulty might occur at an earlier stage. Consider the following incorrect derivation:

\[
\begin{array}{ll}
\text{pra-sīv-Ktā} & 7.2.35 \text{ārdhadhātukasyeṭ valādeḥ} \\
\text{pra-sīv-iT-Ktā} & 7.1.37 \text{samāse 'nañpūrve ktvo lyap}
\end{array}
\]

This would give rise to incorrect *prāsiviya. By not mentioning this possibility, Patañjali avoids the issue.

Patañjali is equally taciturn in the case of the derivation of words like \(yuṣmat\), the ablative plural of \(yuṣmad\). Here the correct derivation is: 931

\[
\begin{array}{ll}
\text{yuṣmad-bhyas} & 4.1.2 \text{svaujas°} \\
\text{yuṣmad-at} & 7.1.31 \text{pañcamyā at} \\
\text{yuṣma-at} & 7.2.90 \text{śeše lopah} \\
\text{yuṣmat} & \text{ }
\end{array}
\]

In this derivation there is no place for P. 7.2.86 \(yuṣmadasmador anādeśe\), which prescribes substitution of long ā for final \(d\) of \(yuṣmad\) before an ending beginning with a consonant, except when the ending itself is a substitute. This accounts for forms like loc. pl. \(yuṣmāsu\). However, at the first stage \(yuṣmad-bhyas\) there is an ending that begins with a consonant, viz. \(bhyas\). How can P. 7.2.86 be prevented to apply here? Patañjali does not say a word about it.

The expression \(anādeśe\) in 7.2.86 \(yuṣmadasmador anādeśe\) needs to retain our attention somewhat longer. It would seem to imply that from Pāṇini’s point of view substitution of a suffix has to precede any operations on the preceding stem. 932 That is to say, Patañjali might have used the presence of this expression \(anādeśe\) to argue that sūtra 7.2.86 cannot apply at the first stage \(yuṣmad-bhyas\). Surprisingly, he does not do so. As a matter of fact, when commenting on this sūtra he states in so many words that the expression \(anādeśe\) is superfluous. 933 Elsewhere he tentatively suggests that this same expression makes known to us that substitutes are like their substituends. 934

In practice, then, Patañjali’s derivations are not always as smooth as he seems to pretend they are. Often he appears to contradict himself, as when he accepts or rejects a

932 Alternatively, it might be understood as a confirmation of the importance of lookahead, as maintained by Joshi & Kiparsky.
933 Mahā-bh III p. 304 l. 17-18 (on P. 7.2.89): \(aṇādeśagrahaṇam sakyam akartum/ katham/ hālity\ anuvartate na cānādeśo halādir astī| tad etad aṇādeśagrahaṇam tiṣṭhatu tāvat sāmnyāsikam//. Renou (1942a: 334 s.v. sāmnyāsika) explains: “‘conforme à la teneur originelle’ du sū[tra] ... (dit d’un élément qui est à conserver, encore qu’on ne puisse le justifier).”
934 Mahā-bh I p. 134 l. 2-4 (on P. 1.1.56 vt. 1): \(evaṃ taryā cāryapraṇvītā jñāpayati sthānīvad ađeśo bhavatīti yad ayaṃ yuṣmāsma\mbox{dator} anādeśe (= P. 7.2.86) ity ađeśapraṇītādham śāsti.
paribhāṣā to suit his convenience. But he tries to stick to his derivational model, whatever the difficulties.

Two linearities in conflict

It seems clear that Patañjali tries both to avoid looking back and looking ahead in explaining grammatical derivations. He is evidently determined to fit them into the straightjacket of linearity as he conceives of it. However, this brings him in conflict with a different principle of linearity, this one introduced by Pāṇini. The rules of the last three ‘quarters’ (pāda) of Pāṇini’s grammar (P. 8.2.1 – 8.4.68) are ordered in such a way that these rules can only apply in order. This portion of the grammar is known by the name Sapādasaptādhyāyī (‘Seven Adhyāyas plus one Pāda’), and the rule imposing rule ordering is P. 8.2.1: pūrvatrasiddham “With regard to what precedes, each subsequent rule has not taken effect”. Patañjali comments also on this portion of the Aṣṭādhyāyī, and Małgorzata Sulich-Cowley has recently studied these in the doctoral dissertation submitted to the University of Warsaw. She comes to the conclusion that Patañjali was not interested in the precise meaning of the word asiddha and proposed alternative explanations of derivations, explanations that go against Pāṇini’s intentions.

Rather than explaining the word asiddha, Patañjali reminds us under P. 8.2.1 what its purpose is: the word is here used ādesālakṣañnapratisedhārtham utsargalakṣñanabhāvārtham “in order to prevent rules that depend on the substitute from taking effect, and to bring it about that rules that depend on the substitutend take effect”. This is in conflict with Pāṇini’s intentions, as can be illustrated with the help of the derivation of vakti, Pres. 3. Sing. of vac ‘speak’. The part of this derivation that interests us is: vac-ti > vak-ti (P. 8.2.30). P. 8.2.30 (coh kuh) prescribes, among other things, substitution of k for c when followed by a sound contained in the pratyāhāra jhal. However, P. 8.2.30 is not the only rule that finds the conditions for its application fulfilled in vac-ti. Another rule, P. 8.4.40 (stoḥ śunā ścuḥ), does so too. It prescribes substitution of c for t on account of the preceding c. If we now follow Pāṇini’s principle, there is no problem. In the situation vac-ti we apply P. 8.2.30, the first rule in the Sapādasaptādhyāyī that is applicable; this gives us vak-ti. P. 8.4.40, which comes later in that same section, is now no longer applicable, and vakti is and remains the final result.

Patañjali’s interpretation of the principle (which he borrows from Kātyāyana) is less straightforward, and may even give incorrect results. In the particular case of vac-ti it does not tell us which rule should be applied first, P. 8.2.30 or P. 8.4.40. If we choose first to apply P. 8.2.30, there is no difficulty and the outcome is, here too, vakti. However, the situation is different if we first apply P. 8.4.40. This then leads to vac-ti > vac-ci. By Patañjali’s principle, the next step should not depend on the substitute (c of ci), but rather on the substitutend t. This allows P. 8.2.20 to apply, leading to vak-ci. The form 8vakci is incorrect, and certainly not the desired outcome of this derivation. And yet, its derivation is not in conflict with Patañjali’s interpretation of the asiddha-principle.

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935 See Ben-Dor 2012.
936 See Bronkhorst 1980a; 1989c.
937 Sulich-Cowley 2012.
So far, so simple. Less simple is the question why Patañjali should abandon Pāṇini’s principle and replace it with his own (and Kātyāyana’s) far less satisfactory principle. The answer may, once again, and at least where Patañjali is concerned, lie in the way he thought about derivations.

For Patañjali, as we have seen, a derivation is a linear affair. What is more, each step in a derivation contains all the information needed to proceed to the next step. We may add that each step ‘knows’ all the Pāṇinian rules that it might need to proceed to that next step.

It is here that the shoe pinches for Patañjali. Pāṇini’s asiddha-principle stipulates that certain rules are ‘unknown’ at specific stages of a derivation. The step vac-tī does not ‘know’ P. 8.4.40, so that its cannot proceed to vac-ci. This, it appears, is unacceptable to Patañjali. For him, the stage vac-tī should by itself be able to make a choice, choosing between the different options on the basis of the guiding principles of the Aṣṭādhyāyī. Well, at this stage the application of P. 8.4.40 is among the available options.

A passage under P. 8.2.2 is interesting in this connection. This sūtra states, among other things, that the deletion of n by P. 8.2.7 is asiddha with respect to what precedes, before a krt-suffix, where technical terms are concerned.939 P. 8.2.7 prescribed deletion of n that is the final sound of a stem that is also a pada.940 Why should deletion of n be asiddha where technical terms are concerned? Patañjali discusses this question in the following passage:941

atha samjñāvidhau kim udāharanam/ pañca sapta/ pañca sapteṣṭa vatra nalopec kṛte

śnāntā sat iti śatsamjñā na prāpnoti/ asiddhatvād bhavati/

(vārttika l:) samjñāgraḥanaṁ nārthakaṁ ca tannimittatvāl lopasyeti/

samjñāgraḥaṁ cānarthakaṁ/ kim kāraṇaṁ/ tannimittatvāl lopasya/ nākṛtāyāṁ

śatsamjñāyāṁ jaśasor lug na cākṛte luki padasamjñā na cākṛtāyāṁ

padasamjñāyāṁ nalopec prāpnoti/ tad etad ānupūrvyā siddham bhavati/

[Question:] And what is an example with regard to the occurrence of samjñāvidhi in P. 8.2.2?

[Answer:] The words pañca and sapta. In pañca and sapta, once n has been deleted [by P. 8.2.7], the technical term sāṣ prescribed by [P. 1.1.24:] śnāntā sāṣ would not apply. Since [P. 8.2.7] is suspended [by P. 8.2.2], [the technical term sāṣ] is applicable.

Vārttika l: The mention of samjñā [in this sūtra] serves no purpose, because the deletion depends on it.
The mention of samjñā serves no purpose. Why? Because the deletion depends on it. Without applying the technical term sāṣ there is no deletion of [the case endings] jas and ūs; without deletion the technical term pada does not apply; without applying the technical term pada there would not be deletion of n. That will be establish by means of the [correct] sequence.

This passage discusses the derivations of pañca and sapta. Since the two hardly differ from each other, we will concentrate on the derivation of pañca (and indeed only on the nominative plural form).

939 P. 8.2.2: nalopec āpsvasaṁjñātukvrdhiṣu kṛti.
940 P. 8.2.7: nalopec prātipadikāntasya.
941 Mahā-bh III p. 387 l. 4-9.
In point of fact, two different derivations of pañca are referred to in this passage: the first one in Patañjali’s words preceding the vārttika, the other one in and immediately following it.

According to the first of these two passages, the derivation of pañca passes through the following stages:

A1) pañca + Jas  
A2) pañca-0 + Jas (P. 8.2.7)  
A3) pañca + 0 (P. 7.1.22)

The step from A1 to A2 — the deletion of n by P. 8.2.7 — is suspended with regard to the step from A2 to A3. Because of this suspension, pañca-0 is still considered to end in n, and is still called ṣaṣ. This allows for the deletion of Jas, which is prescribed after what is technically called ṣaṣ by P. 7.1.22 (saṭbhya Ṽuk).

The second derivation is as follows:

B1) pañca + Jas  
B2) pañca + Jas (pañca is now called ṣaṣ, by P. 1.1.24)  
B3) pañcan + 0 (P. 7.1.22)  
B4) pañca (pañcan is now called pada, because it has a (deleted) nominal ending)  
B5) pañca0 (n is deleted by P. 8.2.7 because it is the final of a pada)

In the first of these two derivations, a rule of the Tripādi (P. 8.2.7) is used before P. 7.1.22, which belongs rather to the Sapādasaptādhāyī. This order of application is presumably only possible because P. 8.2.7 is asiddha.

In the second derivation, there is no need for suspension. The derivation of pañca, therefore, does not justify the presence of samjñā in P. 8.2.2, at least according to Patañjali.

Recall at this point that Pāṇini’s asiddha-principle would never be necessary if the “correct” derivation were always chosen. In other words, derivation B does not show the superfluity of samjñā in P. 8.2.2, unless it can be shown that derivation A is impossible. This is indeed what Patañjali maintains. According to him, stage A2 cannot be reached from stage A1, because pañcan in A1 is not (yet) a pada, and “without applying the technical term pada there would not be deletion of n”. In other words, stage A1 does not unite all the conditions to pass on to stage A2. Quite the contrary, stage A1 (which is identical with stage B1) unites the conditions to pass on to stage B2 and then B3.

[Patañjali presents here derivation B as a list of items that necessarily succeed each other in a derivation, and he does so in the following words: nākṛtāyām ṣaṭsamjñāyāṃ jaśsasor lug na cākṛte luki padasamjñā na cākṛtāyām padasamsamjñāyāṃ nalopah práṇotitī. The similarity with the standard formulation of the Buddhist formula of dependent origination (pratītyasamutpāda) is hard to miss. Its most general form is, in Pāli: imasmin sati idam hoti, imass’ uppādā idam upapajjati, imasmin asati, idam na hoti, imassa nirodhā idam nirajjhati “This being, that becomes; from the arising of this, that arises; this not being, that does not become; from the ceasing of this, that ceases” 942]

942 MN II p. 32; cp. CPD s.v. Paṭicca-samuppāda. The negative part is given in full e.g. at DN II p. 33-34: jātiyā kho asati jāra-maranaṃ na hoti … bhave kho asati jāti na hoti … upādāne kho asati bhavo na hoti … taṁhāya kho asati upādānam na hoti … vedanāya kho asati taṁhā na hoti … phasse kho asati vedanā na hoti … saḷāyatane kho asati phasso na hoti … nāma-rūpe kho asati
This passage confirms, or at least is compatible with, our impression that derivations follow a linearity that may be incompatible with Pāṇini’s linearity of rule application in the Tripāṭī.

III.4. Brahmanical philosophy

Brahmanism came to incorporate various rational philosophies, whose importance for its later development can hardly be exaggerated. It is important to realize that the earliest of these philosophies were not derived from the Veda, but must rather be understood as the result of the interaction of various factors, most of which had non-Brahmanical origins. Rationality itself, and with it the tradition of rational debate, entered India from its Hellenized northwestern regions, and affected Brahmanism most probably through the intermediary of Buddhism: Brahmins who were obliged to defend their position against critical attacks by Buddhists had no choice but to present their views in a coherent shape and without inner contradictions. Furthermore, the most important early Brahmanical schools — Sāmkhya and Vaiśeṣika — incorporated the belief in rebirth and karmic retribution, this too a factor that had non-Brahmanical origins. Indeed, it is possible that Sāmkhya itself — the philosophy that is inseparable from the mythological figure called Kapila — had its origin in Greater Magadha, and therefore outside Brahmanical culture.943 One factor, however, that was purely Brahmanical in origin is the importance attributed to language. But even here, circumstances created a remarkable parallelism with Buddhism, with the result that the Brahmanical philosophies were throughout coloured by Buddhist thought. The present chapter will show this.

III.4.1. Vaiśeṣika

We have seen (§ IIA.4.3) that the individual words of Sanskrit came to be abandoned as reliable sources of knowledge for what exists in the world. Before this happened, this conviction had exerted a determining influence on the Vaiśeṣika system of philosophy, which is essentially an ontology, a presentation of what there is.944 A brief sketch of the system as we find it in Praśasta’s Padārthadharmasamgraha (or Praśastapādabhāṣya), a text that may date from the sixth or seventh century CE, will show this.

The Padārthadharmasamgraha presents a coherent system — or at least one that aspires to coherence — demonstrating several remarkable traits. It enumerates a certain number of ‘categories’ — the term most often used to translate the Sanskrit padārtha — supposed to encompass everything that exists. The number of categories accepted in the Padārthadharmasamgraha is six (other Vaiśeṣika texts accept seven or even ten categories). These categories cover all existent entities, and their enumeration is thus an enumeration of everything that exists. The six categories of the Padārthadharmasamgraha are substance (dravya), quality (guna), motion (karman), universal (sāmānya), particularity (viśeṣa), and inherence (samavāya). This means that

943 See Greater Magadha p. 61 ff.
for Praśasta, the author of this text, everything that exists is either a substance, quality, or motion, or a universal, particularity, or inherence. Nothing exists beyond these six categories.

The categories admit of internal divisions, of course. There are, for instance, nine substances, twenty-four qualities, five motions, etc.; but this does not alter the fact that Vaiśeṣika offers in its six categories a catalogue of everything that exists. It covers not only ultimate constituents but also composite objects. But what interests us most at present is that Vaiśeṣika assumes a close connection between words and the objects of the phenomenal world.

Look again at the Vaiśeṣika list of categories. It is clear that the first three — substance (dravya), quality (guna), and motion (karman) — constitute its core. The designation ‘object’ (artha) is reserved for these three categories, with the other categories not counting as ‘objects’. Their role is clearly subordinate to that of the three main categories. A universal (sāmānya/jāti) groups together a certain number of objects, while particularity (viśeṣa) distinguishes them from one another, and inherence (samavāya) is responsible for their interaction. While the secondary role of these last three categories does not prove that they were added at a later time to an original list containing only substance, quality, and motion, we should not rule out this possibility. What is important for us is to note the foundational role of the first three categories in the system.

These first three categories — substance, quality, and motion — correspond to the three principal types of words in Sanskrit: nouns, adjectives, and verbs. This observation was made in 1918 by the Dutch scholar B. Faddegon, and has been repeated numerous times after him. It would be a mistake to conclude that this classification into three categories imposed itself inevitably on Indian thinkers. On the contrary, many did not accept it, including the Buddhists and the Sāmkhyas. We must rather consider that the Vaiśeṣikas consciously accepted the classification, as well as the correspondence between these categories and the three types of Sanskrit words. I do not know of any passage in their own texts that makes this point explicit, but we have already seen that they could draw inspiration from Patañjali’s Mahābhāṣya in this respect. Moreover, the Vaiśeṣika belief concerning the close connection between words and things finds expression in other ways. We shall turn to these now.

Among the three categories of substance, quality, and motion, the first one, i.e. substance, is, in a certain sense, the most important. It is substance that supports the other two, which are in turn largely determined by the substances in which they inhere. In a complete enumeration of all that exists, a specification of substances is therefore essential. This specification occurs in two stages. First, a list of nine substances is presented. Five of these are the elements (bhūta): earth (prthivī), water (ap), fire (tejas), wind (vāyu), and ether (ākāśa); this list reflects then current views on the composition of matter. The other four are time (kāla), space (diś), soul (ātman), and mind (manas).

Obviously, Vaiśeṣika did not claim that there were only nine, or even five, substantial objects in the world, so a further specification is needed. The number of substantial objects is quite considerable, but Vaiśeṣika texts make no effort to list them all. Why is this? Further, how can one claim to present a complete enumeration of everything that exists without providing a criterion for determining which objects are substances?

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945 See WI p. 3 §§ 14 and 15; VS(C) 2.2.24-25.
946 Faddegon 1918: 107; cf. already Müller 1852: 10-11, 32.
The answer is simple: in principle, a list of Sanskrit nouns is sufficient to delimit the domain of substances. One must be careful, of course, since some nouns denote qualities, or motions, or something else, but the principle remains sound. Indeed, the existence of certain nouns attests to the presence of substances whose existence is less than evident. The same applies to personal pronouns. The personal pronoun ‘I’, for instance, indicates the existence of a soul (conceived of as a substance by the Vaiśeṣikas). The fact that this pronoun does not enter into apposition with the word ‘earth’, etc. (as in “I am earth”), proves that the soul is different from the body (which is, in the case of human beings, a form of earth). The substance ‘time’ (kāla), again according to the Padārthadharmasāṅgṛaha, is the cause of the origin, preservation, and destruction of all produced things, and this because linguistic usage tells us so. The commentators gloss this in the following manner: we say that a certain object is produced at this or that moment, etc. This same substance ‘time’ is also responsible for our use of words referring to various durations, such as ‘day’, ‘month’, ‘year’, etc.

One encounters a good number of arguments of this sort, intended to prove the existence of various qualities. Pleasure, for instance, is a quality of the soul, because we say: “I am pleased.” The qualities ‘distance’ (paratva) and ‘nearness’ (aparatva) are responsible for our use of the words ‘distant’ and ‘near’, respectively.

In general terms one can state that in the Vaiśeṣika system language structures reality. Language does this, first, by means of the semantic relationships between words. Temporarily setting aside the categories of sāmānya, viśeṣa, and samavaya, we arrive at a position according to which everything that exists is either dravya, guna, or karman. Substances (dravya) are divided into numerous sub-categories; Vaiśeṣika, we have seen, recognizes nine. The first of these sub-categories — ‘earth’ (prthivī) or “that which is made of earth” (pārthiva) — is in its turn divided into innumerable objects, such as trees, pots, etc. Now, trees themselves have sub-species, such as the Śīṃśapā, Palāśa, etc. The result can be schematized as follows:

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sat
   |   |   |
  dravya | guna | karman
   |   |   |
  pārthiva āpya, etc. rūpa, etc. utkṣepaṇa, etc.
   |   |
  ṛkṣa ghaṭa, etc.
   |
  śīṃśapā palāśa, etc.
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This scheme is at least in part imposed by language, with some support from generally accepted notions of the period. The division into three types of existent things corresponds, as we have seen, to the three most important types of words: nouns, adjectives, and verbs. The presence of the five elements among the nine types of substances is due to widely recognized views of the period. The division of earthen things...
into trees, pots, etc., seems natural, given that Vaiśeṣika maintained that an object can only be composed of one substance at a time, a subject we shall return to in a moment.

The scheme is ontological in nature: each of its elements represents a universal that is more encompassing than those represented by the elements below it. All of the elements — i.e., all existent things — are characterized by the universal ‘existence’ (sattā). Other universals characterize different portions of this totality. Thus, the universals sattā, dravyatva, pārthivatva, and vrksatva all inhere in the element ‘tree’. On the other hand, we cannot say that everything that exists, or is a substance, or is made of earth, is also a tree, a bearer of the universal vrksatva. The existence of all these universals, each connected to sets of objects that either include other sets or are included in them, confers on the scheme its ontological dimension. In other words, this structure corresponds to reality and not just to the use of words.

Universals by their nature are always connected to sets of objects that either include or are included within other sets; there is no overlap. Were this not the case, there would then be sankara, ‘mixture’, which authors of the school identify as “destructive of universals” (jātibādhaka).947 This indicates that reality does indeed have the structure just described, namely, that of a genealogical tree without any ‘contamination’, if I may borrow an expression used in establishing a stemma of manuscripts. This elegant structure brings with it some rather surprising consequences. To take an example from our diagram: trees — all trees — pertain to the element earth and not to water, because water occurs alongside earth and not directly above trees. As a result, Vaiśeṣika found itself obliged to consider trees as composed exclusively of earth. Water, which is undeniably found in trees, is therefore not actually part of a tree; it is connected to the tree without being one of its constituents.

This short presentation of Vaiśeṣika philosophy should suffice to show that this ontology is, in an important measure, the outcome of an attempt to uncover the structure of reality based on the assumption of a close connection between words and things. However, Vaiśeṣika is not only based on the assumption that there is a close connection between words and things. It also underwent, presumably already in its formative phase, the influence of Buddhist Abhidharma philosophy. To show this, we must refer back to the brief presentation of earliest Buddhist systematic philosophy given in § III.3.1, above. We can learn from this presentation, among other things, that northwestern Buddhist Abhidharma was characterized by the following features:

- It claimed to have an exhaustive enumeration of all there is in the form of its list of dharmas.
- It presented an atomistic view of reality.
- It rejected the existence of composite objects.
- It held that ordinary reality (which is not ‘real’) corresponds to the words of language.

These same four features characterize Vaiśeṣika, either directly or through inversion:

- Vaiśeṣika presents an exhaustive enumeration of all there is in its six (or seven, or ten) categories.
- Vaiśeṣika insists on the atomic nature of reality (even though its atoms are different from those in Abhidharma).

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947 See WI p. 70 (§ 334); Ki. p. 23 l. 3-4; Shastri 1976: 323 ff.
Vaiśeṣika accepts rather than rejects the existence of composite objects; these composite objects exist beside their constituent parts: a pot and its two halves are three different entities.

Vaiśeṣika accepts the correspondence between words and things, but differs from Abhidharma in that it looks upon the objects of ordinary reality as really existing.

It is the word that is real in Vaiśeṣika, not the object. This is the same conviction that, from an early date onward, both Brahmins and Buddhists believed that our commonsense world, the world of our everyday experience, is deeply and fundamentally connected with the language we use to describe it. There is an important difference, of course. For Brahmanism — at least until some of its members started rethinking the world under the influence of Buddhism — language corresponds to the world as it really is. For Buddhism, on the other hand, it corresponds to our commonsense world, which ultimately does not exist. A further difference is that for Brahmanism the language concerned is Sanskrit, the only real language from their point of view. Buddhism did not specify any specific language, and even though in the course of time it came to give preference to some, its conviction that language and commonsense reality are in close correspondence never appears to have been linked to any language in particular.

The partially overlapping convictions of Brahmanism and Buddhism with regard to language allowed thinkers from both traditions to interact and indeed borrow from each other. This chapter deals with issues that have also been dealt with in Bronkhorst 2011b.

See § III.3.1, above.
each other. It is probably safe to say that, as a whole, Brahmanism found itself most often in the role of borrower, and Buddhism in the role of provider of new ideas.

This can be illustrated with a problem that the two movements came to share. The problem involved is evoked by sentences of the type “the potter makes a pot”. Such sentences were felt to be self-contradictory because of the universally held belief that there is a close correspondence between the words of a true statement and the items constituting the situation described. The realization that such sentences constitute a problem was probably more serious for Brahmanical thinkers than it had been for most Buddhists, who perhaps had first drawn attention to it. For until approximately the middle of the first millennium CE, Buddhist philosophers were of the opinion that our common sense world is not ultimately real, Brahmanical philosophers were convinced that it is. During a number of centuries, all Buddhist philosophers denied the reality of the world of our every-day experience, and all Brahmin philosophers accepted it. This distinction is striking enough to warrant a brief discussion of its raison d’être.

Nothing in the teaching of the Buddha as traditionally handed down suggests that ordinary reality does not exist. This idea was introduced later into the Buddhist tradition and subsequently preserved; Brahmanical philosophical schools did not initially adopt this idea, and the idea did not find entrance into some of these schools until much later. Why this opposition? Were there perhaps non-philosophical reasons behind the Brahmanical attachment to ordinary reality, and for the Buddhist inclination to do away with it? Why were these Buddhists so determined to prove the illusory nature of ordinary experience, and the Brahmins committed to its reality?

It seems indeed that more than only philosophical reasons were behind this great divide. Before exploring possible explanations, however, it will be necessary to establish that this divide existed. To do so, recall some known facts about the early history of Indian philosophy.

To begin with Brahmanism: it is well known that the first mention of Vedānta (or Vedāntism) as a philosophical school dates from the 6th century CE, when it is referred to by the Buddhist thinker Bhāvya. Before that time, other philosophical schools debated with each other, but Vedānta did not participate in these debates, nor was it criticized by others. The only sensible conclusion one can draw is that Vedānta did not exist as a philosophical school at that time. (This does not necessarily mean that ideas similar to those we associate with Vedānta did not exist. It only means that we have no evidence that those ideas had been systematized and used in the inter-school debates of that time.)

Other Brahmanical philosophical schools did exist during that period. Two ontologies in particular were widely discussed: Vaiśeṣika and Sāṁkhya. Variants of these were used in the texts of Nyāya and Yoga respectively. We cannot enter into details here, but note that these two ontologies looked upon the world and the objects it contains as really existing entities.

In this respect these two ontologies were in striking contrast with Buddhist ontology. The earliest Buddhist ontology was developed in northwest India, probably by the Sarvāstivādins. This ontology recognized the existence of constituent dharmas, but not that of things composed of dharmas. The objects of our every-day experience, such as

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950 Faxian (around 400 CE) “was ... a witness of ... the mushrooming of apparently Brahmanical schools (ninety-six, according to him), believing in the real existence of this and the next world” (Verardi 2011a: 132; with references to Deeg 2005: 540 and Giles 1923: 35).

951 See § III.3.1, above.
houses and chariots, have as little existence as human beings who, too, are thought of as accumulations (and successions) of dharmas. Subsequent Buddhist thinkers — most notably Nāgārjuna — developed proofs to show that the world of our experience does not exist. These proofs had the further consequence of showing that dharmas do not exist either. A further noteworthy development in Buddhism was the idealism that we associate with Vasubandhu and other thinkers of the Yogācāra school. Whatever the differences between the various Buddhist thinkers, all of them agreed that the world of our experience does not exist as such.

This shows that there was indeed, roughly until the middle of the first millennium CE, a fundamental difference between Buddhist and Brahmanical thought. In spite of all the internal differences and disagreements, all Buddhist philosophers rejected the existence of the commonsense world, and all Brahmanical philosophers accepted it. Why?

I stated above that the answer to this question may not be philosophical, or not only philosophical. Brahmns and Buddhists were in competition. One of the ways in which this competition manifested itself was the debate. It goes without saying that the possibility of open debate gave rise, here as elsewhere, to internalized debate. These debates — whether real or imagined — were fundamental to the development of Indian philosophy, and were to a considerable extent responsible for the different positions elaborated.

The most important debates took place, at least ideally, at the royal court. Debates were therefore more than just philosophical events; they were also political events in the sense that the winner of a debate and his school might profit greatly from the victory, while the loser might lose all including his life.

The court, then, played a central role (whether real or imagined) in the development of Indian philosophy. What was the role of Brahmns and Buddhists at the royal court? Asking this question brings to light another asymmetry with regard to these two groups.

To begin with, the Brahmns had a long tradition of offering services to kings. These services took primarily two forms: ritual support and political advice. It is not necessary to enter into details here. Vedic ritual offered the kind of magical protection that no king would wish to do without. And the political advice that we find in Brahmanical works like the Arthaśāstra and the Māṇava Dharmaśāstra — not to speak of numerous other texts, among them the Mahābhārata and the Rāmāyāna — was presumably of the greatest utility for rulers.

The Buddhists had nothing comparable on offer. They had very little in terms of ritual, and even less in terms of useful political advice. The few Buddhist texts of political advice that have survived — ascribed to the likes of Mātṛceta and Nāgārjuna — are totally impractical, and do little beyond counselling the king to be good, and if that does not work, to become a monk.

The Buddhists of that time were obviously aware of their shortcomings in the realm of political counselling, because they left this job to Brahmns. Buddhists began to

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952 See § III.2.1, above.
953 Bronkhorst 2007a.
954 McClish (2014) shows that the seventh chapter of the Māṇava Dharmaśāstra was composed under the influence of the Arthaśāstra.
955 See Buddhism in the Shadow of Brahmanism p. 39 f.
depict society and their own history in Brahmanical terms. This is clear from the fact that, from the time they started using Sanskrit (itself a major concession to Brahmanism), Buddhists started depicting the good kings of their own past — the father of the Buddha, the Buddha himself in earlier lives — as ideal Brahmanical kings.\(^{956}\)

Buddhists might henceforth still be heard at the royal courts, but hardly in order to solve problems connected with the daily running of a kingdom. Theirs was a different domain, the domain of spiritual wellbeing, rebirth and ultimately liberation, and they accepted this.

In this situation it would hardly have been appropriate for Brahmins to argue that the everyday world of the king, the world in which he had to stay in control, in which he might have to combat neighbouring kingdoms or survive revolts, did not really exist. On the contrary, the Brahmins were there to advise him in the world of political reality, to keep him in power, and to allow him to extend his sovereignty. Their philosophy, if they had to engage in philosophical debate, was a philosophy that was solidly anchored in the reality of the ordinary world, because that was the world in which Brahmins made themselves useful. The Buddhists, on the other hand, played on the spiritual sentiments of the ruler, his fear of death, his concern about future lives. They defended positions in which the reality of the present world was denied, and in which thinkers were led to abandon — at least in thought — this everyday world.

In the Brahmanical philosophies of those days, then, the world of our experience corresponds to reality. The belief in the close correspondence between words and things had always been dear to Brahmins, and we have seen that it was not without difficulty that the idea of something corresponding to each and every word — including words like ‘heaven’, ‘deity’ and apārva — was abandoned for reasons that may at least in part have been social. Brahmanical thinkers were in no hurry to abandon the conviction that true statements and situations in the real world were deeply connected. It was therefore vital for them to find explanations for the contradictions that marred statement like “the potter makes a pot”. They came up with a variety of explanations. We will consider some of these; they are known by the names satkāryavāda, ajātivāda, and asatkāryavāda.

satkāryavāda

Satkāryavāda is the “doctrine of the effect pre-existing in the cause”. There are good reasons to think that it was developed to face the difficulties believed to be associated with statements such as “the potter makes a pot”. Indeed, if we accept that the pot (the effect) is already present in the clay (the cause), this statement is no longer problematic, for there is in that case a pot present while the potter makes one. It is also clear that the satkāryavāda has much in common with the sarvāstivāda of certain Buddhists: in both cases the future object exists already in the present.

The satkāryavāda became part of Sāṃkhya philosophy, but was not yet part of it in its earliest phases. Indeed, several authors (Franco 1991: 127; Larson 1979: 165; Johnston 1937: 25; Liebenthal 1933: 9 n. 11) have drawn attention to the fact that satkāryavāda is without clear precedents in the earlier literature, and must be a relatively late development in Sāṃkhya. Regarding the origin of this doctrine we may recall Liebenthal’s (1933: 4) question: "[Wir] dürfen ... fragen, ob nicht vielleicht satkārya ...\(^{956}\)

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\(^{956}\) See on all this Buddhism in the Shadow of Brahmanism, esp. Chapter Three.
nur ein Aspekt einer Diskussion mit Mādhyamika-Buddhisten ist". We know that this doctrine as part of Sāṃkhya was known to Āryadeva,957 a younger contemporary of Nāgārjuna,958 and to Mallāvādin (DNC I p. 271). It was subsequently adopted in certain other schools.

The Sāṃkhya school of philosophy appears to have been the first to have adopted the satkāryavāda. One of its surviving texts is the Sāṃkhyaśāstra of Īśvarakṛṣṇa, a collection of some seventy verses. Evidence derived from the commentary called Yuktidipikā suggests that Īśvarakṛṣṇa was a younger contemporary of Vindhyavāsin, and may therefore have lived in or soon after 400 CE.959

*Sāṃkhyaśāstra* 9 deals with this satkāryavāda:

The effect pre-exists in the cause, because one cannot make what does not exist, because one always grasps a material cause, because not everything is produced from a given cause, because something can only make that which it is capable of producing, and because a cause is a cause.

Various explanations of this dense stanza are provided in a number of commentaries. The most significant among these is the Yuktidipikā. From among the arguments presented in the verse, the first and the last one are of most interest to us. The first one ("because one cannot make what does not exist") takes us back to the potter and his pot: When a pot is produced, does it exist or does it not exist? An opponent takes the position that a pot that already exists cannot be produced; the Yuktidipikā argues against it.960

The end of *Sāṃkhyaśāstra* 9 offers the following justification of the satkāryavāda: kāraṇabhaśvāc ca sat kāryam. This phrase is ambiguous. It can mean "and because [the cause] is a cause, the effect exists" or "and because [the effect] is identical with the cause, the effect exists".961 The former of these two interpretations reminds us of the following verse of Nāgārjuna: "A cause of something non-existent makes no sense; a cause of something that exists already makes no sense either. Which non-existing thing has a cause? And what could be the purpose of a cause for something that exists?"962 It tells us that effect and cause depend upon each other, and must therefore coexist. Stated differently: where there is a cause, there must be an effect; or: because the cause is a cause, the effect exists. The second interpretation is different, and has no direct link with the type of arguments we find in Nāgārjuna's work. Which of these two interpretations is correct, i.e., original?

A glance at the commentaries shows that all but one of them have chosen the second interpretation. The possible exception is the Yuktidipikā, which explains:963 ihāsatī kārye kāraṇabhāvo nāsti. This is of course still ambiguous, because we can translate "if the effect does not exist, [the cause] is not a cause" or "if the effect does not exist, [it (i.e., the effect)] is not a cause". Technically both interpretations are possible, but I fail to see what could be the point of the second one. The first interpretation, on the other hand, fits

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960 YD (WM) p. 112 l. 8-11 & p. 122 l. 3-17.
961 The first part could also be translated "on account of the existence of the cause". This does not however lead to an intelligible interpretation.
962 MadhK(deJ) 1.6.
963 YD (P) p. 54 l. 32; (WM) p. 124 l. 7.
in well with the argument of Nāgarjuna just considered: since cause and effect depend upon each other, they must co-occur. As a result, there is no cause without effect. Otherwise put, the cause is no cause, when there is no effect present.

This interpretation of the end of Sāṅkhya-kārikā 9 is confirmed in another way, too. The "Śataka of Āryadeva is no doubt one of the earliest texts that testifies to the existence of the satkārṇavaṇḍa among the followers of Sāṅkhya. It has been preserved in Chinese translation. Giuseppe Tucci translates the words which this text puts in the mouth of the defender of Sāṅkhya in the following manner.⁹⁶⁴

The effect pre-exists in the cause, on account of the existence of the cause.

In this form these words do not seem to communicate anything intelligible. But it is easy to see that Tucci's "on account of the existence of the cause" corresponds to Sanskrit kāranabhāvāt — exactly the expression which we also find in the Sāṅkhya-kārikā. I believe that the Chinese translation agrees with this interpretation. The correct translation should therefore be:

The effect pre-exists in the cause, because it is a cause.

This statement is, of course, still ambiguous, because it does not say explicitly which of the two — the effect or the cause — is a cause. However, the commentator Vasu gives an explanation which, at last, removes the ambiguity. I offer once again Tucci's English translation.⁹⁶⁵

If the pot does not pre-exist in earth, then earth could not become the cause of the pot.

This remark by Vasu looks like a paraphrase of the explanation in the Yuktidipikā which we considered above, and which reads:

if the effect does not exist, [the cause] is not a cause

or

if the effect does not exist, [it (i.e., the effect)] is not a cause

But whereas the Yuktidipikā passage remained ambiguous, Vasu's passage specifies that it is the cause (in the example used: the earth) which cannot be (or become) a cause, if the effect (the pot) is not present.

It is not possible here to discuss the complicated question of the relationship between the Yuktidipikā and Vasu's commentary on Āryadeva's Śataka. Nor do I wish to impose an interpretation on the Yuktidipikā borrowed from Vasu's commentary. It seems however clear that in the earliest documents justifying the satkārṇavaṇḍa in connection with the Sāṅkhya philosophy, a Nāgarjuna-like argument was used. This implies, I would propose, that this argument, and the correspondence principle on which it was

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based, played a role in the justification, and presumably also in the introduction of the satkāravāda in Sāmkhya.

The satkāravāda was not limited to Sāmkhya. The same position is taken in Śaṅkara’s Brahmaśūtrabhāṣya, which justifies it as follows:

If the effect did not exist prior to its coming into being, the coming into being would be without agent and empty. For coming into being is an activity, and must therefore have an agent, like such activities as going etc. It would be contradictory to say that something is an activity, but has no agent. It could be thought that the coming into being of a pot, though mentioned, would not have the pot as agent, but rather something else. ... If that were true, one would say “the potter and other causes come into being” instead of “the pot comes into being”. In the world however, when one says “the pot comes into being” no one understands that also the potter etc. come into being; for these are understood to have already come into being.966

This passage, and the underlined sentence in particular, show the close link between satkāravāda and language in Śaṅkara’s mind.

Another early Sāmkhya text, the Yogaśāstra, may here briefly be considered. Its colophons attribute it to someone called Patañjali. It consists of two parts, the Yogasūtra (a number of aphoristic statements) and the Yogabhāṣya, which comments on them. The colophons also state that this text propounds the Sāmkhya philosophy, but, rather than adopting the satkāravāda in order to find a solution to the difficulties that the new linguistic analysis had given rise to, the Yogaśāstra remains close to the Buddhist sarvāstivāda. This illustrates the proximity of satkāravāda and sarvāstivāda. Indeed, since there is no further specification in the text, it can be read as an expression either of sarvāstivāda or of an extended satkāravāda. But whatever the choice we make, it is clear that the author of the Yogaśāstra had an answer to the difficulties associated with “the potter makes a pot”. For “the cause of an already existent fruit is capable of making it present, but not of creating something new”. Since the pot (i.e., the fruit) is already existent in the clay (i.e., the cause), the latter is capable of making the former present.

ajātivāda

A different solution to the same problem is the ajātivāda, “the doctrine according to which there is no arising”. This is a more radical response to the question whether something existent or something non-existent is produced: the pot that is produced, does it exist or not? The radical response that goes by this name cuts the knot by stating that, since this question cannot be answered, nothing is produced at all.

The most famous text that takes this position is the Āgamaśāstra, a work in four chapters that is attributed to an author called Gauḍapāda, but may in reality be a collection of chapters by different authors. It is certain that the later chapters show strong Buddhist influence, and may in origin be Buddhist texts. Nevertheless, the text as a whole is considered a work of Vedānta philosophy, and legend has it that Gauḍapāda was the

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teacher of the teacher of Śaṅkara. The Āgamaśāstra states in so many words that nothing arises.

The ajātivāda is much closer to the Buddhist position than the satkāryavāda. While the satkāryavāda tries to save the phenomena by insisting that there are objectively real things corresponding to, say, the pot in “the pot is produced”, the ajātivāda abandons hope and states that “the pot is produced” cannot possibly correspond to objective reality: all the items in this sentence are nothing but words.

\[\text{asatkāryavāda}\]

Asatkāryavāda is the “doctrine of the non-existent effect”. As its name shows, it is the opposite or even denial of the satkāryavāda. That is to say, the situation described in “the potter makes a pot” does not contain a pot. This doctrine was most notably adopted by the Nyāya school of philosophy. A consideration of some passages of one of its classical text, Vātsyāyana’s Nyāyabhāṣya, reveals some of the ideas it contains.

The example “He makes a mat” occurred in one of these passages. Here the word ‘mat’ was claimed to give expression to the intention of the agent, his intention to make a mat. The absence of a mat in the situation depicted presented therefore no difficulty to Vātsyāyana.

The Nyāyabhāṣya has more to say about the production of new entities. In one passage it states that words expressive of grammatical actors (i.e., the agents, objects, etc. of a sentence) can refer to the past and the future; they do not have to designate something that is present in the situation depicted. In another one it claims that the pot, in “the potter makes a pot”, is “established in (or by) the mind”; the word ‘pot’, therefore, refers to a mental pot, not to a pot made of clay.

But Vātsyāyana’s final solution is different. Following Nyāyasūtra 2.2.65(66), he holds that the meaning of a word covers all of the following three: individual, form and universal. The third of these three is particularly useful for the problem at hand. The universal ‘pot-ness’ being existent and eternal, it is already there when the pot comes into being, or is made. Schools like Nyāya did not therefore have to accept the satkāryavāda, and chose rather the opposite position, the asatkāryavāda: the pot is not yet there when it is being made.

Vaiśeṣika, too, does not accept that the pot is already there before it comes into being. And its ontology, too, allows for universals. One would therefore, here too, expect a solution of the kind that the word ‘pot’ denotes — perhaps along with other things — the universal. The word ‘pot’ in “he makes a pot” will in this way have something to refer to, and the problem will be solved.

From a certain date onward Vaiśeṣika authors do indeed opt for this solution. The Padārthadharmasāṅgāraha, or Prāsaṅgikadābhāṣya, does not however deal with this problem, and nor does the Vaiśeṣikasūtra. Since we have practically no other texts for the early period, one might be tempted to conclude that Vaiśeṣika authors chose this solution right from the time they became aware of the problem of origination. This expectation is however belied by some passages describing Vaiśeṣika points of view preserved in the works of non-Vaiśeṣika authors, which inform us about the period before the Padārthadharmasāṅgāraha.
A passage from the Vibhaṣāprabhāvrtti, a commentary on the Abhidharmadīpa, a text of the Buddhist Sarvāstivāda school, attributes the following position to the Vaiśeṣikas:967

The Vaiśeṣika thinks [as follows]: The substance ‘pot’, which is not present in the potsherds [out of which it will be constituted], and the substance ‘cloth’, which is not present in the threads [out of which it will be constituted], come into being as a result of the contact between the potsherds and that of the threads [respectively]. And through secondary thought (gaunyā kalpanayā) one speaks of the existence of the agent of coming into being, [existence] which has as object a state [of the pot] which is opposite [to the present].

Mysterious as this passage may be, it states quite clearly that the pot exists prior to its coming into being, thanks to a secondary thought. No further details are provided.

The position here attributed to Vaiśeṣika is confirmed in the Vyomavatī of Vyomaśiva, a commentary on the Padārthadharmasaṅgraha also known as the Prāsastapādabhāṣya. In a critique of the Śāmkhya position, Vyomaśiva makes the following observation:

One should consider the designation [‘sprout’ in] “the sprout arises”, as well as [‘pot’ in] “make a pot”, to be metaphorical, because there exists an obstacle to primary [denotation]. To explain: if one regarded the already existent pot as the object [of the act of making], and the [already existent] sprout as the agent [of the act of arising], arising would be contradicted, and the action of the actants (kāraka) would be useless, because [the pot and the sprout] would already exist. … It follows that, as something existent cannot be the thing that arises, the sprout is metaphorically the agent of its own arising, and [the pot] the object [of the act of making]. In this way [these] designations are differently established.968

Metaphorical existence, we will see below, is a notion that may have been introduced in this discussion by Bhartrihari.

A discussion in the Dvādaśāranayacakra of Mallavādīn and in its commentary the Nyāyāgamāṇusārīnī of Simhasūri provides further material to think about. We learn here that in Vaiśeṣika things that have come into being are called ‘existing’ because of a connection with the universal ‘existence’ (sattāsambandha). This connection with the

967 Abhidh-d ad kārikā 310, p. 274 l. 5-7: vaiśeṣiko manyate: kapāleśv avidyamānaṃ ghaṭadṛavyam tantuṣu cāvidyamānaṃ paṭādṛavyam kapālantaṁstasyogād utpadyate/ gaunyā ca kalpanayā viprakṛtavasthāviśayā janīkakṛtassāt vyapadiśyata iti/. The word viprakṛta is obscure. The editor, Padmanabha S. Jaini, suggests an emendation into viprakṛṣṭa ‘distant’, but this does not improve much. Apte's dictionary gives viprakṛta, among other meanings, the sens ‘opposed’ which seems to fit more or less both here and two lines further down where the word is used a second time.

968 Vyomaśiva’s Vyomavatī, vol. 2 p. 129 l. 19-27: yac cāyam vyapadeśo ‘ṅkuro jāyate, ghaṭam kurv iti ayam api mukhye bādhakapramānasadbhāvād bhātka draṣṭavyah/ tathā hi, yadi vidyamāṇasyaiva ghaṭasya karmatvaṃ anikuraśya ca kartrtvam isyetotpattir vyāhataḥ syāt, vidyamāṇatvaḥ eva kārakavyāpāvaiyarthaś cāḥ/ …/ tasmād vyādhyānaśa utpattyarthāsambhāvād upacaritam anikurdeḥ svajanikartrtvam karmatvaḥ ceti vyapadeśasyaṁyathāśiddhatvam/
universal ‘existence’ takes place at the moment of, or immediately after, their completion; it is the reason of the denomination and of the idea of the things concerned.  

Here the following question arises: Are objects completely non-existent before this connection with the universal ‘existence’ takes place? According to Mallavādīn, the Vaiśeṣikas give a negative answer to this question. Things do exist in a certain way before they come into being. True, they have no connection with the universal ‘existence’ at that moment, but they have some kind of essence (astitva, svabhāva, svabhāvasattā), which allows them to come into being. This means that even without connection with the universal ‘existence’, a substance (or, for that matter, a quality or a movement) has an identity. The Vaiśeṣika, according to Mallavādīn, goes to the extent of reinterpreting the expression asat, which normally means ‘non-existent’. The Vaiśeṣika takes it as a bahuḥṛti compound, and interprets it to mean "that which does not have ‘existence’". The expression asatākāryavāda, seen this way, does not say that the effect is not there before it comes into being; it only says that is has no connection with the universal ‘existence’ as yet.

The main discussion takes place in the seventh chapter (lit. spoke, ara) of the Dvādaśāranyacakra. The asatākāryavāda of Vaiśeṣika is attacked right from the very first line: "If the effect is not present [in its causes], it would not come into being, for there would be no agent of the operation [of coming into being] at hand, just as [in the case of] a sky-flower. Or [alternatively] also a sky-flower would come into being, because there would be no agent of the operation [of coming into being] at hand, just as [in the case of] an effect."

This is, of course, the familiar problem of origination. The Vaiśeṣika recognizes the problem, and maintains that the effect does not exist before it comes into being. However, there are two kinds of existence. The effect has no connection with the universal ‘existence’ (sattā) before it comes into being; but it is there, in a certain way — it has astitva. This is why the Vaiśeṣika answers: "Unlike the sky-flower, the effect, having come into being through its own astitva becomes, even without the relationship of inherence with [the universal ‘existence’], a support [for that universal]."

The opponent of the Vaiśeṣika then raises the question whether the universal ‘existence’ (sattā) makes existent that which exists, or that which does not exist, or that which exists and does not exist. It is here that the Vaiśeṣika observes that one can deny

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969 DNC vol. 2, p. 459 l. 8-9: ... sattāsambandho ’bhidhānapratayayahetuh. Cp. ibid. p. 512 l. 2 (niṣṭhāsambandhayor ekaḍāvatvā) and the two interpretations of this vākya discussed there.


971 DNC vol. 2, p. 455 l. 1-2: yady asat kāryāṃ notpadayeta asannihitabhaṅitrakatvāt khapuspavat/ khapuspam api votpadyeta asannihitabhaṅitrakatvāt kāryavat/ khapuspam api votpadyeta asannihitabhaṅitrakatvāt kāryavat/

972 DNC vol. 2, p. 456 l. 1-2: ... āśrayāsāmāvāyābd rie ’pi kāryaṁ svaṇaivaśīttenotpampam āśrayo bhavati khapuspavanāḥtanyena ...

973 DNC vol. 2, p. 459 l. 1-2: iha prāk sattāsambandhāt satāṁ vā asatām vā sadasatām vā dravyādīnām satkari satā? Similar criticism in the Madhyamakahrdayakārikā and Tarkajvalā of Bhāvaviveka; see Tachikawa 1994: 898. (Note that the name Tarkajvalā is used both for the commentary on the Madhyamakahrdayakārikā and for the verses alone; see Krasser 2011: 50 n. 1.)
that substances etc. have a connection with the universal 'existence', but not their existence through their own form; the universal 'existence' does not, therefore, make non-existent things existent.\textsuperscript{974}

I will cite one more sentence from the \textit{Dvādaśāranayacakra}, which Mallavādīn ascribes to the Vaiśeṣika: \textsuperscript{975} "And the [object which is \textit{asat}] is not[, for that matter,] without identity, like a hare's horn. Even without connection with \textit{sattā}, it is in our system (\textit{iha}) like in another one, where \textit{pradhāna} etc. have an identity." Elsewhere in the discussion the Vaiśeṣika recalls that \textit{sāmnyya}, \textit{viśeṣa} and \textit{samavāya} — all Vaiśeṣika categories — exist without having connection with \textit{sattā}. But the comparison with the \textit{pradhāna} of Śāṃkhyā — for there can be no doubt that a comparison with the Śāṃkhyā system of philosophy is here made — is remarkable. For Śāṃkhyā adheres to the \textit{satkāryavāda}, and is therefore in many ways the exact opposite of Vaiśeṣika with its \textit{asatkāryavāda}. The comparison shows that the Vaiśeṣikas to whose writings Mallavādīn had access came dangerously close to the position of the Śāṃkhyās where they tried to solve the problem of origination.

A very important question remains. If the Vaiśeṣikas maintained that things exist in a certain way before they come into being, can one determine the beginning of this 'half-existence'? Are they there from beginningless time, as the Śāṃkhyās believed? To my knowledge, Mallavādīn's and Śimhasūri's discussions offer no answer to this question. We may find the answer in another early text, the \textit{Yuktidīpikā}, which comments upon the Śāṃkhyakārikā. Around kārikā 9 this text contains a discussion with a Vaiśeṣika on the \textit{satkāryavāda}. Where it presents the argument that one cannot make something that is not there — an argument with which we are familiar — it puts the following words in the mouth of the Vaiśeṣika: \textsuperscript{976} "But the effect is made by the agent etc. in the intermediate time. Which is this intermediate time? The answer is (follows a verse): They call 'intermediate time' the time during which the causes have started to do the work, until the production of the effect."

I conclude, be it with much caution, that the 'preexistence' of something that is going to come into being is not without beginning. This passage from the \textit{Yuktidīpikā} suggests rather that this "preexistence" starts when the different factors that contribute to produce the effect, i.e., to make the pot, start fulfilling their various functions. The intermediate time is neither without beginning, nor momentary.

At this point a short discussion of the early literary history of Vaiśeṣika is required. Which were the Vaiśeṣika texts in which the positions outlined above found expression?

\textsuperscript{974} DNC vol. 2, p. 460 1-2: \ldots dravyādīnāṃ sattāsambandhah pratiśidhyate na tu svarātāsadbhāva iti sattā naivaśatām satkāri.

\textsuperscript{975} DNC vol. 2, p. 462 1-6-7: na ca tad api nīrtmakam śaśavisāṇavat, sattāsambandhād ṛte 'pi yathā parapakṣe pradhānādīnāṃ sāmakatvam tathecāpi syāt.

\textsuperscript{976} YD (P) p. 52 l. 16-21; (WM) p. 118 l. 9-15: āhya, nanu ca madhyame kāle kātrādibhīḥ kāryam kriyate/ kāḥ punar asau madhyamaḥ kāla iti? āhya:

ārāmbhāya prasṛtā yasmin kāle bhavanti kartāraḥ/

kāryasyānispādāt taṃ madhyamaṃ kālam icaḥ antas/ iti

yadā hetavaḥ pravṛttārāmbhā bhavantu uddhiṣṭā kāryam na ca tāvan naimitikasyāśamelabhāḥ sanvartate sa madhyamaḥ kālaḥ/ yasmin kriyate kārakaiḥ kāryam iti/. Čp. Motegi 1994: 815 f.;

Motegi draws attention to the fact that the reading \textit{kāryasyānispādāt} in the verse is an emendation which deviates from the manuscripts. YD (WM) has here: \textit{kāryasyā niṣ<ś>ātās}
The oldest clearly understandable and unitary Vaiśeṣika text that we possess is the *Padārthadharmasāṅgraha* of Praśasta, mentioned earlier. This text may belong to the sixth century of the Common Era. Beside the *Padārthadharmasāṅgraha* we have a short text that has only survived in Chinese translation, and which may have been called *Daśapadārthī*; it is too short to derive much information from. And then there is, of course, the *Vaiśeṣikāsūtra*. The *Vaiśeṣikāsūtra* is the oldest Vaiśeṣika text we possess, and it may well be the earliest Vaiśeṣika text that ever existed. It, or rather its earliest version, must date back to the early centuries of the Common Era, for Vaiśeṣika is already referred to in the Buddhist *Vibhāṣā*. Unfortunately the *Vaiśeṣikāsūtra* that is known to us is not identical with its earliest version. Five versions have been preserved, all of which share features that belong to a time well after the beginning of the system. Sūtras have been added and removed, and even the order of the sūtras appears to have occasionally been changed so as to allow of a different interpretation.

It is not clear until what date modifications were still introduced into the *Vaiśeṣikāsūtra*. It is certain that a long time separates the earliest version of this text from the *Padārthadharmasāṅgraha*. And it is also becoming ever more obvious that during this period much happened to the system. The sūtra that enumerates qualities, for example, has just seventeen of them. *The Padārthadharmasāṅgraha*, on the other hand, enumerates twenty-four qualities. Among the added qualities we find sound, and there is indeed evidence that early Vaiśeṣika looked upon sound, not as a quality, but as a substance, a form of wind. Another example concerns the creator god: the *Vaiśeṣikāsūtra* contains no trace of a creator god, in the *Padārthadharmasāṅgraha* he has assumed this position. We even have evidence from the *Yuktidīpikā* and from Śaṅkara to the extent that early Vaiśeṣika did not accept a creator god, whereas later thinkers of the school did.

Most of these changes were not introduced into the system by Praśasta. The idea of a creator god may be an exception and there is some reason to assume that Praśasta himself may have played a crucial role. Most of the other developments must have found their earliest expression in a number of texts that existed during the long time that separates the original *Vaiśeṣikāsūtra* from the *Padārthadharmasāṅgraha*. Of most of these texts even the names will probably remain forever unknown to us. About a few of them, however, we have some information. One is a commentary (*Tīkā*) written by Praśastamati, who must be the same person as Praśasta, the author of the *Padārthadharmasāṅgraha*. The other is the text on which he wrote a commentary, and which appears to have been wellknown in its time. From the various testimonies in the texts of other schools, it appears that this text was called *Kaṭandī*, and that its author was known by the name Rāvana. The *Kaṭandī* was itself a commentary, on the *Vaiśeṣikāsūtra*, and it was written in the so-called Vārttika-style, which explains that we sometimes find references to *vākyas* and *bhāsyas*; the Vārttika-style is characterized by the presence of short nominal *vākyas* followed by somewhat more elaborate explanations called *bhāsyas*. 

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977 Ui 1917: 38 ff.
978 Three versions were known, accompanied by the commentaries of Candrānanda, Bhaṭṭa Vāḍindra and Śaṅkara Miśra respectively; two more have been brought to light in Harunaga Isaacson's doctoral dissertation (1995).
980 See Bronkhorst 1993a (on sound); 1996b (on God).
This Kāṇḍī (or whatever may have been its name) appears to have been an authoritative text for quite some time. It is indeed the text to which Mallāvādīn constantly refers while describing and criticizing the Vaiśeṣika position. It appears that also the other texts we have referred to — the Buddhist Vībhāṣāprabhāvṛtti and the Sāṃkhya Yuktidīpikā — based their information concerning Vaiśeṣika on this text. However this may be, it seems likely that the problem of origination did not play much of a role, if any, during the time of composition of the original Vaiśeṣikasūtra, and that it came up at a later time, perhaps for the first time in the Kāṇḍī.

I have already pointed out that later Vaiśeṣika came to adopt a solution to the problem of origination that was quite different from the one offered in the Kāṇḍī. Later Vaiśeṣikas joined the Naiyāyikas in thinking that the fact that words refer to universals solved that problem. Once this solution is accepted, the complicated distinction between two forms of existence, and the attempt to use it in order to answer the question how something can come into being, became superfluous, and the weaknesses of the earlier solution, such as its vagueness (when exactly does the pre-existence of a pot begin?), could not but contribute to its decline. The earlier solution was not just refuted; worse, it was forgotten, and no one talked about it any more. It is not impossible that this change of position of the Vaiśeṣika thinkers is responsible for the fact that the Kāṇḍī and its commentary by Praśasta, once the main works of the school, stopped to be handed down. Praśasta’s Padārθadharmasaṅgraha, on the other hand, does not touch the question of origination; is this the reason that it continued to be handed down in a fairly large number of manuscript copies until today? It is hard to prove these suspicions, but I would like to suggest that the loss of philosophical texts may in certain cases have been occasioned by the fact that points of view changed. It may be significant that among the later authors on Vaiśeṣika, only one, Vyomaśiva, retains some traces of the earlier discussion by defining the effect (kārya) as svakāraṇasattāsambandha. All others define this term differently, as was pointed out by Masanobu Nozawa (1993).

III.4.3. Language or grammar?

We have seen that language and ideas about language exercised a strong influence on Brahmanical philosophy in many of its expressions. In spite of that, it has been claimed that it is grammar, and more in particular the Sanskrit grammar of Pāṇini, rather than general ideas about language, that was the primary influence. The two claims do not necessarily contradict each other; they might both be true. And yet, we will see that the influence of grammar on Indian thought is less strong than is often claimed.

Let us look first at the influence that grammar is supposed to have exerted on Indian philosophy. The importance of traditional Sanskrit grammar cannot be doubted. Pāṇini’s grammar and its commentaries, or its more or less close imitations by others, have allowed Sanskrit to impose itself as language of scholarly communication. Most classical text of Indian philosophy have been composed in Sanskrit, and this was only possible because its authors studied Sanskrit grammar. Pāṇini’s method and that of his earliest surviving commentators — especially Kātyāyana and Patañjali — is in this way the first method with which young scholars had to familiarize themselves, and it goes without saying that this would leave traces in their intellectual output. Patañjali already
stated that grammar is the most important auxiliary science of the Veda.\footnote{Mahā-bh I p. 1 l. 19} Bhartrhari, a grammarian and philosopher living in the fifth century CE, describes grammar as "the supreme science, purifying filter of all sciences".\footnote{Vkp 1.14.} And Ānandavardhana, a celebrated author on poetics belonging to the ninth century, adds that grammarians are the most excellent scholars because all sciences are based on grammar.\footnote{Bhattacharya 1985: 7; 1996: 172. Cp. Torella 1987: 152 n. 6.}

A number of modern scholars follow in the footsteps of these authors. Consider first Louis Renou. In the second volume of L’Inde classique, he states: “Adhérer à la pensée indienne, c’est d’abord penser en grammairien” (Renou 1953b: 86). Already in 1942, he had said: “La pensée indienne a pour substructure des raisonnements d’ordre grammatical” (Renou 1942: 164 [468, 370]).\footnote{Compare further Renou 1940: 35, on grammatical philosophy: “Il y a là un courant d’échange qui a été profond et efficace pour le développement de la pensée indienne.” and (p. 36): “Le terme de la pénétration des notions grammaticales dans les cercles philosophiques peut être figuré par l’érection de l’Aṣṭādhyaṭī en dārsana, au XIVe s., telle que la présente le Sarvadarṣānasamgraha.”}

For a correct appreciation of these remarks, we must take into consideration what Renou had said just before the above quote from L’Inde classique. Here he says the following about grammar (Renou 1953b: 86): “Servante de la théologie à l’origine, elle est demeurée dans l’Inde classique l’instrument privilégié de l’interprétation: on l’appelle ‘le premier des membres du Veda’, ‘le Veda des Veda’, ‘la voie royale’. Tous les commentaires y recourent, même les commentaires philosophiques où la mīmāṃśa en particulier a instauré sur des bases grammaticales une herméneutique ritualiste.” This passage shows that Renou does not claim that Indian philosophy is based on grammar in the sense that the former has taken its fundamental ideas from the latter. On the contrary, grammar is a tool in the hands of philosophers and others in cases where they are confronted with the task of interpreting textual passages. Interpreting texts is primarily the task of Mīmāṃśa, a school that is basically not a philosophical school but rather a school of Vedic hermeneutics. Mīmāṃśa uses grammar as a tool, but the various philosophical positions it adopts in the course of its history are not based on or derived from grammar.

In his article “Grammaire et vedānta” (1957) Renou confirms what has just been said. As an example, he takes Śaṅkara's commentary on the Brahmasūtra. This commentary presents Vedānta as a form of Mīmāṃśa; it distinguishes itself from ritual Mīmāṃśa by designations such as Brahmapīmāṃśa, Śārīarakamīmāṃśa and, several centuries later, Uttaramīmāṃśa. As a result, Śaṅkara's commentary frequently interprets Vedic, and more in particular Upaniṣadic passages. Nowhere does Renou suggest that the fundamental ideas of his school are derived from grammatical thought. On the contrary, Renou tries to “voir l’usage que fait Śaṅkara de notions ou de formes de raisonnement émanant ou susceptibles d’émancer des écoles grammaticales” (p. 121 [470, 407]). One finds here “des emprunts à la Grammaire, valables pour des besoins limités, pour alimenter des gloses particulières”, as well as procedures that “se retrouvent dans les commentaires sur la mīmāṃśa, parfois aussi dans ceux sur le nyāya”. With regard to these borrowings and procedures, “on ne peut strictement démontrer qu’ils aient pris naissance chez les grammairiens, sauf là où le contenu est nettement grammatical.” Renou adds: “Là même où l’on pense atteindre un élément grammatical, c’est à travers la
mīmāṃsā qu'il a pu parvenir à Śaṅkara.” (p. 124 [472, 410]). In other words, Śaṅkara certainly knew Pāṇini's grammar, but apart from purely grammatical questions, an influence of grammar on his thought is not evident. Nor is such an influence evident in ritual Mīmāṃsā.

In his article “Les connexions entre le rituel et la grammaire en sanskrit” (1942), Renou brings to light several parallels between ritual para-Vedic literature and grammar. He reminds us that both arose in the same social milieu at about the same time. He draws attention to the use of the Sūtra style both in Pāṇini's grammar and in the Śrautasūtras, to the use in both of general interpretative rules (paribhāṣā), and to an often shared vocabulary. He resumes this part his article in the following passage (Renou 1942: 160 [466-67, 366]):

Cette série de concordances entre les habitudes linguistiques du rituel et de la théorie grammaticale atteste qu'on a affaire à des disciplines issues des mêmes milieux, répondant à des besoins complémentaires. L'une et l'autre ont pour norme la pratique des śiṣṭa, des spécialistes ... En présence de ce mot particulier, il n'est pas aisé de reconnaître s'il sort des cercles de grammairiens ou des cercles de ritualistes : l'absence de toute chronologie textuelle, le parallélisme général des techniques dans l'Inde ancienne, rendent cette recherche aléatoire. Dans beaucoup de cas cependant il est visible que le point de départ est dans les textes religieux, la valeur grammaticale apparaissant comme une spécialisation à l'intérieur d'une acception rituelle mieux articulée. La masse, l'importance de la littérature religieuse, l'indéniable priorité des mantra et des formes liturgiques qu'ils présupposent, invitent à voir de ce côté l'origine.

According to Renou, then, Sanskrit grammar at its beginning used and refined elements from ritual literature, a literature that came into existence roughly at the same time. Influence of grammar on this literature is therefore uncertain or even improbable.

Renou does not only talk about ancient ritual literature. Throughout his discussion he shows how Mīmāṃsā continues the features that ancient ritual literature has in common with grammar. And toward the end of his article, immediately after the sentence cited above (“La pensée indienne a pour substructure des raisonnements d'ordre grammatical” [p. 164 (468, 370)]), he continues: “La mīmāṃsā, en tant que prolongement et pour ainsi dire jurisprudence du rituel, implique une masse de données philologiques qui remontent en fin de compte à la grammaire”. He gives various examples of discussions in Mīmāṃsā that could betray influence from the Mahābhāṣya of Patañjali and a familiarity with Pāṇini's grammatical analysis. Turning next to Vedānta, he makes the following remarks: “Le vedānta semble à première vue bien éloigné de ces problèmes. Mais il suffit de lire attentivement Śaṅkara ou Rāmānuja pour constater que leur pensée est constamment étayée et nourrie de raisonnements grammaticaux.” We have already seen that Renou, some fifteen years later, dedicates an article to the use Śaṅkara makes of grammar.

Having considered the way in which Louis Renou justified the position that finds expression in observations like “Adhérer à la pensée indienne, c'est d'abord penser en grammairien” or “La pensée indienne a pour substructure des raisonnements d'ordre grammatical”, we are obliged to conclude that Renou's “la pensée indienne” does not correspond to most of what we call Indian philosophy. Only Mīmāṃsā and Vedānta can illustrate his thesis. This is hardly surprising in that these two schools do not present
themselves as philosophical schools but rather as schools of interpretation. It is true that Mīmāṃsā subsequently acquired a philosophical superstructure by borrowing ideas from other schools, but no one claims that those philosophical ideas were inspired by grammar. The Vedānta school of thought had a doctrinal side from the beginning, to be sure, but it claims to find this doctrine in the texts it interprets. Grammar helps in the interpretation of those texts, but does not contribute to the resulting doctrine.

Let us now consider the opinions of Daniel H. H. Ingalls (1954a) and Frits Staal (1960; 1963; 1965; 1993). Ingalls — in an article called "The comparison of Indian and Western philosophy" — made the following interesting observation (1954a: 4): "In philosophizing the Greeks made as much use as possible of mathematics. The Indians, curiously, failed to do this, curiously because they were good mathematicians. Instead, they made as much use as possible of grammatical theory and argument." This observation should not — as goes without saying in our day and age — be read as a description of the Indian 'genius' as opposed to that of the Greeks (at least not in some absolute sense), but as a reminder of the important roles that mathematics and linguistics have played as methodical guidelines in the development of philosophy in Greece and in India respectively. Ingalls appears to have been the first to draw attention to this important distinction.

He was not the last. Ingalls's observation has been further elaborated by J. F. (= Frits) Staal in several publications (1960; 1963; 1965). Staal focuses the discussion on two historical persons in particular, Euclid and Pāṇini, both of whom — as he maintains — have exerted an important, even formative, influence on developments in their respective cultures. Staal also broadens the horizon by drawing other areas than only philosophy into the picture. To cite his own words (1965: 114 = 1988: 158):

"Historically speaking, Pāṇini's method has occupied a place comparable to that held by Euclid's method in Western thought. Scientific developments have therefore taken different directions in India and in the West. Pāṇini's system produced at an early date such logical distinctions as those between language and metalanguage, theorem and metatheorem, use and mention, which were"

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985 Filliozat (1995: 40) observes: "Obviously in the mind of the Indian learned men the study of language held the place which mathematics held in the mind of the ancient Greek philosophers." See also Ruegg 1978.

986 Note Lloyd's (1990: 87 f.) observation that the influence of Euclid's Elements on the development of Greek science was not only positive. Lloyd draws attention in particular to medicine and physiology, certain areas of mathematics itself, and to the extent to which problems in physics and elsewhere had a tendency to be idealized (exactness may be obtained only at the cost of applicability).

987 It is an open question whether and to what extent Euclid’s method has influenced Western scientific thought. In the fascinating confrontation that opposed the Jesuits to Galileo and his followers, the former defended, with all the means at their disposal, Euclid’s method against the idea of indivisibles and infinitesimals promoted by the latter. But it is the latter’s “dangerous mathematical theory [that] shaped the modern world”. “Euclidian geometry”, on the other hand, “came to be associated with a particular form of social and political organization ... rigid, unchanging, hierarchical, and encompassing all aspects of life”; “If the Jesuits and their allies had had their way, there would be no calculus, no analysis, nor any of the scientific and technological innovations that flowed from these powerful mathematical techniques” (Alexander 2014: 218; 291).
discovered much later in Europe. In other Indian sciences, e.g., in mathematics and astronomy, as well as in later grammatical systems of Sanskrit, Prakrit, and Tamil, systematic abbreviations are used which not only are ingenuous but also constitute new adaptations of the same method.

The statement “Scientific developments have therefore taken different directions in India and in the West” is of particular interest. It suggests that there are methodical differences between Euclid’s Elements and Pāṇini’s Astādhyāyī. Staal does not tell us which they are. On the contrary, he emphasizes the common features of these two works, as in the following passage (1965: 113 = 1988: 157)

When comparing Pāṇini’s system with Euclid's Elements, a characteristic of the latter, i.e., deduction, appears absent from the former. It is true that there is a kind of deduction in Pāṇini’s grammar: dadhyatra is deduced from dadhi atra, and other forms are similarly deduced with the help of rules. But such deductions do not seem to attain the same degree of generality as Euclid's proofs. However, the difference reflects a distinction of objects, not of structure. In Euclid's geometry, propositions are derived from axioms with the help of logical rules which are accepted as true. In Pāṇini's grammar, linguistic forms are derived from grammatical elements with the help of rules which were framed ad hoc (i.e., sūtras). Both systems exhibit a structure of logical deduction with the help of rules, and both scholars attempted to arrive at a structural description of facts. In both systems, contradictions and unnecessary complications are avoided. In both cases, the aim is adequate and simple description.

In the immediately following paragraph Staal does mention that there are differences (“More detailed investigations into the methods of Euclid and Pāṇini would throw light on points of difference as well”), but he does not say which ones they are. Instead he mentions one more common feature: “Another common characteristic is the above-mentioned desire to shorten principles (where Euclid pays attention to minimum number, Pāṇini to minimum length), while disregarding the length of derivations.” One looks in vain for a specification of the methodical differences between Euclid and Pāṇini which might explain that ‘therefore’ scientific developments have taken different directions in India and in the West.

Thirty years later Staal still emphasized the importance of Euclid and Pāṇini, and invoked them as typical examples of the scientific developments in their respective cultures. About Euclid he says (1993: 7): "The ancient Greeks developed logic and a notion of rationality as deduction best exhibited by Euclid's geometry. These discoveries contributed substantially to the development of Western science." About India he observes (1993: 22): "Ancient Indian civilization was an oral tradition and the oral transmission of the tradition became the first object of scientific inquiry. Thus arose two human sciences, closely related to each other in their formal structure: the sciences of ritual and language." The science of ritual, he points out, formulated ordered rules which express the regularities of Vedic ritual. He then continues (p. 23-24): "The Sanskrit grammarians used rules of precisely this form and demonstrated in a similar manner why many of them have to be ordered. In consequence of metarules, rule-order and other formal properties of rules, Pāṇini developed Sanskrit grammar as a derivational system in some respects more sophisticated than the deductive system of Euclid ..." But when one
searches in this later publication for a specification of the methodical differences between Pāṇini and Euclid, one is once again disappointed. Here, too, one finds rather an emphatic statement to the effect that the two are essentially similar (1993: 24):

Science is universal and its main branches developed in all the great civilizations. ... The great traditions of Eurasia are basically similar but there are differences between them in character and emphasis. West Eurasian science is characterized by an emphasis on nature and punctuated increases and decreases in theoretical and empirical sophistication; ... Indian science by formal analysis and an emphasis on human theory.

The ‘therefore’ of “Scientific developments have therefore taken different directions in India and in the West” still remains shrouded in mystery.

A way to lift the veil might be to find out whether and to what extent grammatical influence is noticeable in Indian mathematical literature, and the extent to which Pāṇini’s work may have provided a methodical guideline for the authors of mathematical texts. This question will gain in importance if we concentrate on the portions on geometry in Indian mathematical texts, because here we will be able to make a direct comparison with Euclid. If we find obvious differences in method between Euclid and classical Indian geometry, we may then ask whether and to what extent these differences are due to the influence of Pāṇini. The fact that the geometry of Indian mathematical astronomy may ultimately derive from Euclidean geometry will make this question all the more poignant.989

Let me cite a second time the following passage from Staal's article "Euclid and Pāṇini": "When comparing Pāṇini’s system with Euclid's Elements, a characteristic of the latter, i.e., deduction, appears absent from the former. It is true that there is a kind of deduction in Pāṇini’s grammar: dadhyatra is deduced from dadhi atra, and other forms are similarly deduced with the help of rules. But such deductions do not seem to attain the same degree of generality as Euclid’s proofs. However, the difference reflects a distinction of objects, not of structure."990 This statement claims that the fact that deductions of a certain type are present in Euclid and absent in Pāṇini is due to the distinction between the objects that these two sciences are dealing with. It suggests that a

989 On the Greek influence on Indian astronomy, see Pingree 1971; 1993. On the extent to which Greek geometry influenced Indian geometry, see also Shukla’s remark cited below.
990 Cp. Joseph 1991: 217-219: “An indirect consequence of Panini’s efforts to increase the linguistic facility of Sanskrit soon became apparent in the character of scientific and mathematical literature. This may be brought out by comparing the grammar of Sanskrit with the geometry of Euclid — a particularly apposite comparison since, whereas mathematics grew out of philosophy in ancient Greece, it was, as we shall see, partly an outcome of linguistic developments in India. The geometry of Euclid’s Elements starts with a few definitions, axioms and postulates and then proceeds to build up an imposing structure of closely interlinked theorems, each of which is in itself logically coherent and complete. In a similar fashion, Panini began his study of Sanskrit by taking about 1700 basic building blocks — some general concepts, vowels and consonants, nouns, pronouns and verbs, and so on — and proceeded to group them into various classes. With these roots and some appropriate suffixes and prefixes, he constructed compound words by a process not dissimilar to the way in which one specifies a function in modern mathematics. Consequently, the linguistic facility of the language came to be reflected in the character of mathematical literature and reasoning in India.”
competent scholar in classical India who dealt with geometry rather than with grammar would use the same kind of deductions as Euclid.

This, of course, is a testable suggestion, and we can draw conclusions from evidence provided by Bhāskara's commentary on Āryabhaṭa's Āryabhaṭīya, one of the earliest texts that provide first-hand information about classical Indian geometry in practice. The outcome of this test is uncertain: There is no proof for the claimed methodical guidance of Pāṇini's grammar with respect to classical Indian geometry, except perhaps where completely external features of presentation are concerned. Contentwise, classical Indian geometry contrasts as sharply with Euclidean geometry as do other pre-modern geometries — in China, Babylonia and Egypt — which had no knowledge of Pāṇini's grammar. Like these other pre-modern geometries, classical Indian geometry did not use proofs. The most noteworthy distinguishing feature of classical Indian geometry is that, unlike the other pre-modern geometries, it developed in surroundings where the notion of proof was wellknown. It is not immediately clear whether this lack of susceptibility to the notion of proof on the part of classical Indian geometry is in need of an explanation. If so, Pāṇini's grammar might conceivably be enumerated among the factors that played a role. In that case one may have to consider the possibility that the influence of Pāṇini's grammar, far from encouraging the development of an abstract geometry, had the opposite effect.

While, then, Pāṇini's grammar may have exerted an influence on the development of geometry in India, the influence it exerted on the development of philosophy has no doubt been overstated. This misunderstanding is understandable, because ideas about language different from grammar deeply influenced the development of Indian philosophy, as we have seen. It is true that one Indian philosopher, Bhātrārāṇi, explicitly used grammar in creating his system of philosophy. But even Bhātrārāṇi was strongly influenced by general ideas about language that had nothing to do with grammar in particular.

III.5. The origins of the Indian theater

In a discussion of the origins of the Indian theater the name of Sylvain Lévi must occupy a central position. Lévi was neither the first nor the last to be interested in the origins of the Indian theater. However, the way in which he dealt with the question in Le théâtre indien (1890), his doctoral dissertation, has exerted a major influence on the subsequent debate, and has to a large extent determined its outcome.

Let us look at this debate in its broadest outline. Lévi dedicates a chapter of his book to the question whether the Indian theater had undergone Greek influence; this had been the position of some scholars before him. Lévi rejects this position after an in-depth discussion. And this is in essence the end of the debate in Indian studies. Outside of Indian studies, there are still a few attempts to uphold the thesis of Greek influence (Reich 1903: 694 f.), but no Indologists are convinced. Renou states in 1936 (1936/1937: XVI) that the question remains open. In 1953 (Renou, 1953a: 261 [§ 1849]) he observes that "la question irritante des rapports avec le drame grec ... paraît en sommeil"

991 For details, see § III.2.2, above.
992 There is proof that Bhāskara was thoroughly acquainted with Pāṇinian grammar; see Appendix IX, below.
aujourd'hui, comme tant de problèmes de l'indianisme”. Renou's *sleep* (‘sommeil’) is a euphemism, for most Indologists consider henceforth the problem solved. This is true of Sten Konow (1920: 40 f.), A. Berriedale Keith (1924: 57 f.), Jan Gonda (1943: 329 f. [350 f.]), Indu Shekhar (1960: 54 f.), and others. In 1963 (p. XIV) Renou notes “la question n'a plus été reprise qu'à de rares intervalles ultérieurement à 1890 [year in which *Le Théâtre indien* was published; JB]: comme tant d'autres, elle tombe au point mort quand les promoteurs ne sont plus là pour défendre leur thèse.” Three years later Paul Thieme (1966) does not even find it necessary to mention the question of the possibility of Greek influence in an article that is yet called “Les origines du théâtre indien”.993 F. B. J. Kuiper (1979: 110), to conclude, does not hesitate to claim that the old idea of a Greek origin has been definitely refuted, without mentioning when and by whom it has supposedly been refuted. Kuiper’s publication is to my knowledge the most recent one that deals with the question in detail.994

An analysis of the arguments presented by the Indologists concerned (to the extent that they presented any) shows that they do little beyond referring to each other. Apart from some individual elaborations and additions,995 the whole argumentative structure that is supposed to legitimate the generally accepted position today — viz., that the hypothesis of Greek influence on the beginnings of the Indian theatre can be ignored — rests on the arguments Sylvain Lévi had given in his *Théâtre indien*.996 It has for this reason been possible to say that Lévi’s criticism “constituent dans l’ensemble ... la plus formidable ligne de défense qui ait jamais été dressée contre l’hypothèse de toute influence externe”.997 In what follows I will therefore concentrate on his arguments.

Recall to begin with that Sylvain Lévi was not the first to address the question of Greek influence on the Indian theatre in 1890. Lévi knew well the positions of his predecessors. He quotes Richard Pischel in particular:998 “S’imaginer que le théâtre grec ait exercé une certaine influence sur la formation du théâtre indien, c’est témoigner une égale ignorance du théâtre grec et du théâtre indien.”

If Richard Pischel represented one extreme, his compatriot Ernst Windisch represented another. Windisch published in 1882 a book on Greek influence on the Indian theater: *Der griechische Einfluss im indischen Drama*.999 This books, as Lévi

993 Thieme dealt with the question in another article — this one in German — that came out in the same year (“Das indische Theater”; 1966a).
995 On the claimed references to the theater in the ancient grammarians, see Renou 1963: XV: “Au sujet des grammairiens, S. Lévi avait vu l’essential: la mention des natasûtra’s ou « Aphorismes sur l’art scénique » chez Pâñini, celle des saubhika’s, mi-acteurs, mi-récitants, chez Patañjali. Il était réservé à l’enquête ultérieure de pousser plus loin l’argument, sans réussir toutefois à lui enlever son caractère hypothétique.”
996 The claim by M. Christopher Byrski (1974: 14) to the extent that a book by A. Gawroński (written in 1916, published thirty years later) “is the first scholarly refutation of the theory of Greek influence on Indian drama”, cannot therefore be correct. I have had no access to Gawroński’s book.
998 French translation of Pischel 1875: 19.
999 Windisch 1882. Windisch (1920: 400) observes that similar statements had been made before him by E. Brandes in a publication (1870) that had remained unknown to him. Opposition to Windisch’s thesis was immediate: Schroeder (1887: 598) mentions the criticisms of H. Jacobi and R. Pischel during its first presentation, and adds his own. But others, among them Vincent A.
observes, reads like a defence of such influence. Lévi takes this book as point of
departure for his discussion. He examines all of its arguments, which he rejects one by
one, so that he arrives at a conclusion that is similar to that of Pischel, with this difference
that his conclusion is based on a detailed argumentation.

It is important to understand how Sylvain Lévi arrives at his conclusion, because
the method determines in a way its content. Lévi’s position in his Théâtre indien is the
antithesis of Windisch’s position in the latter’s Der griechische Einfluss im indischen
Drama. However, Windisch had not been content to say that there is Greek influence on
the Indian theater. He had presented a specific thesis that went well beyond the general
thesis according to which there was Greek influence on the Indian theater. When Sylvain
Lévi criticizes the position of Ernst Windisch, some of his arguments concern the general
thesis, and others concern the specific thesis. The arguments that show that the specific
thesis is indefensible show nothing with respect to the general thesis. And yet, the
rejection of the specific thesis created the impression that now also the general thesis had
been refuted, not only in Sylvain Lévi, but also in his successors.

We will turn to the specific thesis of Windisch in a while. Let us first look at the
general thesis as it had been formulated by Albrecht Weber. Lévi refers to this general
thesis in the very beginning of his chapter on Greek influence. The passage concerned
deserves to be quoted in full (1890: 343-344):

Entre les peuples qui sont entrés en contact avec l’Inde aux temps lointains de son
histoire, les Grecs seuls ont une littérature dramatique. Est-ce donc la Grèce qui
a donné à l’Inde son théâtre? M. Weber, qui s’est signalé par son opiniâtreté à
rechercher les traces de l’influence grecque sur la civilisation brahmanique, aposé
hardiment la question dans son admirable Histoire de la Littérature Indienne.

« Le drame indien atteint sa perfection dès les premières œuvres que nous
en connaissions. La plupart des prologues, il est vrai, présentent la pièce en
question comme nouvelle par rapport à celles des poètes antérieurs, mais nous
n’avons rien conservé d’eux, non plus que des débuts de la poésie dramatique. On
peut dès lors se demander si la représentation des drames grecs à la cour des rois
grecs en Bactriane, au Penjab et en Guzerat (car la puissance grecque s’étendue
jusqu’à ces régions) n’a point provoqué l’esprit d’imitation des Indiens, et si elle n’a
point été ainsi la cause originelle (Ursache) du drame indien. Sans doute il n’y a
pas de preuves à en fournir, mais du moins les données de l’histoire rendent
incontestablement cette hypothèse possible, d’autant que les plus anciens drames

Smith (1889: 184 sq.), accepted his thesis. (Note that in his Oxford History of India [first edition
1919] Smith has changed his mind: “it may be said that Greek or Hellenistic influence upon India
was slight and superficial, much less in amount than I believed it to be when the subject first
attracted me” [Smith 1958: 159].)

This appears indeed to be the case. Roger Darrobers writes, in 1995 (p. 3): “La formation du
théâtre peut sembler relativement tardive en Chine, pays de tradition écrite plurimillénaire: les
pièces ne sont pas antérieures au XIe siècle, et les plus anciens livrets en notre possession
remontent à l’époque mongole (1279-1367). Les premiers dramaturges sont postérieurs de plus
d’un millénaire et demi à Sophocle, Eschyle ou Euripide. La Chine antique n’a pas produit un
théâtre tragique et mythologique équivalent à celui qui s’est épanoui en Grèce, ni un théâtre
satirique et social semblable à celui d’Aristophane à Athènes ou de Plaute et Térence à Rome.”
indiens ont été composés dans l'ouest de l'Inde. Du reste, il n'y pas de rapport interne entre le théâtre des deux peuples\footnote{French translation of Weber 1852: 192: “Aus dem Bisherigen hat sich ergeben, das uns das Drama gleich vollendet und mit seinen besten Stücke entgegengeworfen: es wird denn auch fast in allen Prologen das betreffende Werk als neu im Gegensatze zu den Stücken der früheren Dichter dargestellt: von diesen aber, also den Anfängen der dramatischen Dichtkunst, ist uns nicht das Geringste erhalten. Es ist sonach die Vermuthung, ob nicht etwa die Aufführung griechischer Dramen an den Höfen der griechischen Könige in Baktrien, im Penjab und in Guzerate (denn so weit hat sich ja eine Zeitlang die griechische Macht erstreckt) die Nachahmungskraft der Inder geweckt habe, und so die Ursache zum indischen Drama geworden sei, zwar vor der Hand durch nichts direkt zu beweisen, aber die historische Möglichkeit dafür ist wenigstens unläugbar: zumal da die älteren Drama fast alle in dem \textit{Westen} Indiens gehören. Ein \textit{innerer} Zusammenhang mit dem griechischen Drama übrigens findet nicht statt.” The French translation of Alfred Sadous has (Weber 1859: 326-27): “le drame s'est présenté à nous tout achevé et avec ses meilleures pièces: de plus dans presque tous les prologues l'ouvrage en question est montré comme nouveau en opposition avec les pièces des poètes anciens: mais de ces dernières pièces, et par conséquent des commencements de l'art dramatique, il ne nous est absolument rien resté. Ainsi l'on ne peut jusqu'à présent prouver par aucun argument direct cette supposition, à savoir que la représentation de drames grecs à la cour des rois grecs dans la Bactriane, le Penjab et le Guzerat (car c'est jusque là, comme on le sait, que pendant un temps s'est étendue la puissance grecque) n'a point éveillé l'instinct d'imitation des Indiens, et n'a pas été ainsi la source du drame indien, mais on ne peut en nier du moins la possibilité historique: d'autant plus que les drames anciens appartiennent presque tous à l'ouest de l'Inde. Du reste un lien plus intime avec le drame grec n'existe pas.”
\footnote{Reference to Weber 1876: 194 n. 2: “jetzt sage ich also: auf die \textit{Entwicklung} des indischen Drama's einen \textit{gewissen Einfluss} geübt habe”. Cp. Weber 1890: 24 [920]: “Zwischen den ... einfachen und grotesken Anfängen ... bis zu dër Vollendung, welche das indische Drama bei Kālidāsa ... zeigt, muss eine lange Stufenfolge von Zwischenstadien angenommen werden, und hierbei ist es denn, wo dem etwaigen Einfluss des griechischen Drama's Thür und Thor offen steht.”}
\footnote{Windisch 1882: 16 [111]: “Griechische \textit{Aufführungen}, nicht bloße Berichte, müssen es gewesen sein, von denen indische Dichter sich beeinflussten ließen.”}
\footnote{Lévi 1890: 346; cited from Windisch 1882: 16 [111]: “Die neuere attische Komödie konnte aber überall Anklang finden, in Rom wie in Ujjayini, da sie sich mit dem gewöhnlichen Leben der}

Lévi quotes this long passage from Albrecht Weber, including even the correction that the latter had subsequently added. Against this general thesis he has but one single argument. It is the enormous time-interval that, according to him, separates the disappearance of the Greeks from India during the first century before the Common Era and the first manifestations of the Indian theater in the masterpieces of Kālidāsa, five or six centuries later.

This argument is weak, and has been further shattered by more recent discoveries, which we will return to below. Most of Lévi's chapter on Greek influence deals with Windisch's specific thesis. The German scholar had discussed an influence from the side of the New Attic Comedy, and maintained that this influence had reached India through concrete performances rather than through hear-say.\footnote{Windisch 1882: 16 [111]: “Die neuere attische Komödie konnte aber überall Anklang finden, in Rom wie in Ujjayini, da sie sich mit dem gewöhnlichen Leben der}
trouver un écho partout, à Rome aussi bien qu’à Ujjayinī, car elle s'occupe de la vie ordinaire des hommes, et avec son ton local, elle contient bien des choses qui ont trait à l'humanité en général.”

At the end of a long and detailed analysis, Lévi concludes (p. 364): “Les arguments recueillis à l’appui de l’hypothèse grecque se retournent contre elle” and (p. 365): “Le raisonnement, comme les faits, dément l'hypothèse de l'influence grecque”. This conclusion does not distinguish between Windisch's general and his specific thesis. The refutation of the specific thesis is presented as if it were a refutation of the general thesis. But we have seen that Lévi had but one single argument against the general thesis, an argument whose force has been reduced by subsequent discoveries.

Let us look one more time at the question regarding a specific thesis. There are two specific theses, one by Windisch and one by Reich. Both have been criticized by Indologists. Unfortunately, these Indologists have repeated Lévi's mistake, thinking that the refutation of specific theses amounts to a refutation of the general thesis, i.e. of Greek influence in whatever form. It is in this manner that Paul Regnau (1898: IX f.) criticizes the position of Windisch without worrying about the general thesis. Hermann Oldenberg (1903: 241 f.) mentions the theses of Windisch and Reich, characterizes them and improbable, and seems to believe that this suffices to express doubts as to Greek influence in general.1005 Moriz Winternitz (1920: 174 f.) reduces the question of Greek influence to an evaluation of the thesis of Reich, with respect to which he cannot make up his mind.1006 Sten Konow (1920: 40-41) does not have this problem: he refutes the theses of Windisch and Reich, and does not leave space for a more general thesis. A. B. Keith (1924: 68), after a balanced discussion, holds that certain considerations plead against borrowing. His use of the word borrowing reveals that his argument has moved, perhaps unconsciously, from the idea of an influence in the broadest sense to the idea of a specific influence, viz. borrowing. Jan Gonda characterizes in 1943 (p. 330 [351]) the ideas of Windisch and Reich as being outdated, and seems to believe that that claim is enough to dismiss the possibility of Greek influence in whatever form. Indu Shekhar (1960: 57) puts forward the argument that Indian dramatic literature is in several respects fundamentally different from Greek dramatic literature. Once again, absence of Greek influence in these respects is considered to annul the possibility of Greek influence in general.1007 Kuiper, in 1979, does not even specify any longer which arguments supposedly refute the old idea of Greek influence, or even what old idea he is precisely

Menschen beschäftigt, und dieses bei allem Localton doch sehr viel allgemein Menschliches enthält.”


1006 According to La Vallée-Poussin (1930: 300), “Winternitz a raison de penser que H. Reich dans son Der Mimus (1903) signale des faits fort intéressants”. La Vallée-Poussin (p. 298) also quotes remarks from E. Senart “qu’il faut retenir et méditer”, remarks that on one hand accept in India usages “qui forment un premier embryon de création dramatique”, but which also raise the following question: “Ne serait-ce pas à une impulsion venue du dehors qu'elle devrait l'idée de son drame littéraire?”

1007 This same observation is behind Lyne Bansat-Boudon’s following remark (1992: 11): “All those features prove original enough to make the hypothesis of a Greek influence unacceptable.”
referring to. And yet, the arguments one finds in the secondary literature concern almost exclusively specific theses, primarily those of Windisch and Reich. The way in which Kuiper formulates his rejection — he says (Kuiper 1979: 110): “The old idea of a Greek origin and that of the Greek-Roman pantomime being the source of the (North-)Indian drama have definitely been refuted” — betrays that he, too, confused the specific thesis of Reich and the general thesis of Greek influence.

It is possible that Sylvain Lévi was aware that his treatment of the problem had left the general thesis virtually untouched. Indeed, in a subsequent study, where he suggests that the Sanskrit theater must have come about under the Kṣatrapas of western India, he makes the following remark (1902: 124): “Si le théâtre sanscrit est né à la cour des Kṣatrapas, la théorie de l’influence grecque semble gagner en vraisemblance. Le pays des Kṣatrapas était sans doute le plus hellénisé de l’Inde, puisqu’il était le marché le plus important du commerce hellénistique.” This reflection should have opened the way to a resurrection of the general thesis. But no, Lévi rejects the general thesis once again on the basis of a specific thesis, stating: “Rien ne donne à croire cependant que l’influence des Grecs ait pu s'étendre jusqu'à la littérature: les caractères grecs tracés sur les monnaies des Kṣatrapas résistent encore aux essais d'interprétation, et semblent prouver que l'hellénisation restait très superficielle.” In other words, the general thesis of Greek influence on the Sanskrit theater is inseparably connected, in Lévi’s mind, with a specific thesis according to which no such influence would have been possible without an advanced degree of hellenization, so much so that Indian scholars would have familiarized themselves with Greek literature.

In passing it may be said here that, in spite of the above, Sylvain Lévi invokes the possibility of Greek influence, not this time in connection with the Sanskrit theater, but rather to explain the appearance of Mahāyāna in Buddhism: the role of stains and their cleansing in the thinking of the Buddhist Asaṅga might be a reflection of Manichaeism; the doctrine of dharmas that is characteristic of the school of Asaṅga recalls the Intelligibles taught by the Neoplatonics from the third century onward; etc. (Lévi 1911: Introduction, p. 17 f.). None of this plays much of a role in the reflections of Buddhologists today. But these speculations clearly show that Lévi did not in principle discard the idea of a possible Greek influence on India.

Let us return to our main theme. The history of Indology since the 1880s is full of discussions of specific theses about a possible Greek influence on the Indian theater. These discussions are no doubt responsible for the fact that well before Windisch another Indologist of great repute had formulated the general thesis as to Greek influence on the Indian theater. The subsequent confusion has completely overshadowed the form that had been given to this thesis. Its author is, of course, Albrecht Weber, and we have already seen that Sylvain Lévi knew his position very well. He cited a long passage from his work, reproduced above, but surprisingly he does not comment upon it. Lévi quotes the impetuous reaction of Richard Pischel, who claimed that the thesis of Greek influence on the Indian theater cannot be based on ignorance of both traditions. He then passes on to the ideas of Ernst Windisch. All Indologists after him have done the same, and the ideas of Albrecht Weber have been all but forgotten.

1008 This observation should not make us forget that the culture of the Kushana Empire, too, betrays much that is of Greek inspiration; see Holt 1999: 136 f.
1009 Exception: Vassiliades 2000: 70.
And yet, Lévi’s only argument against Weber was the long interval of time that he believed separated the first Sanskrit dramas from the Greeks. We have seen that Lévi himself suppressed this argument in 1902, by playing with the suggestion that the Sanskrit might have begun with the western Ksatrapas. The discoveries of fragments of Buddhist dramas belonging to the very first centuries of the Common Era (Lüders 1911), of the so-called dramas of Bhāsa,1010 (Gaṇapati Sāstri 1912), and the dating of the kernel of Bharata’s Nāṭyaśāstra to roughly the first century (e.g., Feistel 1969: 136 sq.), deprive this argument of all its remaining credibility.

Other considerations further weaken Lévi’s initial thesis. The Nāṭyaśāstra presents the theater as something that has its place — primarily or even exclusively — at the royal court.1011 To suppose that the court of certain kings continues, or is inspired by, another court is therefore neither surprising nor improbable. The supposition becomes even more probable in view of the fact that orthodox Brahmanical texts express a negative view regarding all that has to do with dance, singing and music.1012 Regarding the typically Indian character of the Sanskrit drama, it is useful to recall the following words of La Vallée-Poussin (1930: 242): “Il y a bien des siècles qu'Albirouni écrivait : ‘Dites quelque chose à un Hindou : il vous répétera demain votre leçon en indien et vous n’y reconnaîtrez pas grand chose.’ Rien n’a été emprunté par l'Inde qui n'ait été vite hindouisé.”

We know that the Greeks of northwestern India cultivated the Greek theater. The excavation in Ai-Khanoum have brought to light a very big amphitheater, with places for some 6’000 spectators. Unsurprisingly, the person responsible for these excavations, Paul Bernard (1976: 314 f.), points out that time has much changed the data bearing on the problem of a possible Greek influence on the Indian theater (p. 320). Bernard’s remark, as far as I can see, has fallen on deaf ears in the Indological community.

It is true that all Indian dramas that have survived, and Bharata's old treatise, are completely Indian. Several theories have therefore been proposed regarding the links between the classical theater and earlier Indian elements, often Vedic; there is no reason to abandon all of them in favor of an exclusively Greek origin. But let us not forget that influence does not have to be exact borrowing. Paul Bernard, in the article referred to above, recalls that influence can adopt several forms. He writes (Bernard 1976: 321-22):

Si une influence de cette sorte s’est jamais produite, elle aurait pu s'exercer de trois façons différentes, selon l'intensité plus ou moins grande qu'on lui suppose : soit par des emprunts délibérés : c'est la thèse de l'imitation directe soutenue par Windisch et par Reich ; soit que la Grèce n’ait fait que donner l’impulsion au génie propre de l’Inde, lui transmettant simplement l’idée du genre théâtral : c’est la thèse de la cause originelle, de l’‘Ursache’, avancée par Weber ; soit enfin que la présence d’un théâtre grec en Asie centrale et dans l’Inde du Nord-Ouest ait favorisé et accéléré, à la manière d’un catalyseur, l’élaboration déjà en cours du théâtre indien dont les origines devraient, dans ces conditions, être considérées comme purement nationales.

1010 The “controversie inépuisable” (voir Renou 1963: XVIII n. 29) that has come to surround the dramas attributed to this author is not relevant in the present context, especially since Sylvain Lévi considered their authenticity indisputable (Lévi 1914: II).
1011 See Kuiper 1979: 114.
1012 Horsch 1966: 324 sq.
Since Sylvain Lévi, criticism has targeted the first of these three possibilities, which we now know is untenable.\footnote{I am aware of only one exception. Chr. Lindtner (2002: 199), in a review of Windisch's \textit{Kleine Schriften} de Windisch, remarks: "Very important still is the long paper on the Greek influence on the Indian drama ..., with which I concur ..." Cp. also Simson 2002: 308: "Es lohnt sich jedenfalls, Windischs Gründe genau zu studieren, bevor man sich eventuell der ablehnenden Haltung Pischels, v. Schroeders, Lévys (sic) und anderer anschliesst."} Options two and three, on the other hand, do not endanger researches regarding the Indian roots of the Sanskrit theater. They are not therefore affected by the criticism.

Apart from the absence of arguments against Greek influence on the Sanskrit theater, one may also think of factors that rather plead in its favour. It is beyond contest that Greek influence plays in other domains of Indian culture, as in astronomy and the plastic arts. In the case of astronomy this influence has taken the form of material borrowings.\footnote{Curiously, this fact is used as argument against Greek influence on the Indian theater by S. K. De (Dasgupta & De 1947: 652): "Against the possibility of any foreign influence we may say that it is remarkable that in Indian drama as we find it the characters are peculiarly of Indian national type. When Indian astronomy and Indian sculpture let themselves to be influenced by Greek ideas the matter can be detected very easily. But in the development of the Indian drama we find essentially the Indian spirit and Indian life. As it now stands, the development of Indian drama seems to be quite independent of Greek influence."} This means that it is not the idea of astronomy as such that entered Indian thought from the Hellenistic world; in fact, there was astronomy in India well before there were any contacts with the Greek or Hellenistic world.\footnote{Cf. Holt 1999: 38: "These [i.e., the theater and the gymnasium in Ai Khanoum] constituted the defining institutions of Greek civic life, as essential as the olive and the grape to the sustenance of Hellenic civilization."} It is rather specific conceptions — which constituted so to say the content of Hellenistic astronomy — that have been borrowed by Indian astronomy.\footnote{On the Hellenistic element in the old city of Taxila (Sanskrit: Takṣaśilā), see Karttunen 1990.} But material borrowings are not the only form under which there can be influence. It is at least conceivable that a general idea passes from one culture to another without the specific conceptions that are associated with it. It is possible, even likely (see § III.2.1, above), that the tradition of critical debate that accompanied Hellenistic kings wherever they installed themselves is at the basis of the development of systematic philosophy in India. In this case, a general idea, or even a simple custom, entered Indian culture from the Greeks in the Northwest, without there being any specific idea of Greek philosophy that, as far as we can tell, ever entered into the different traditions of Indian thought. Critical debate being a relatively public affair, it may have influenced even those who were not familiar with, or did not understand, its contents. The situation may have been similar in the case of the theater. The construction in Ai Khanoum of an amphitheater that could accommodate at last 6'000 persons (Bernard 1978: 432), could not hide from contemporary visitors that the Greeks had a taste for this kind of amusement.\footnote{Add to this that the western Kṣatrapas,}
according to Sylvain Lévi the most hellenized rulers in India, may very well have been sensitive to the dramatic genre, even if no one in their entourage could read Greek or even knew that Greek theatrical literature existed. 1019

How do we explain that for more than a century since Sylvain Lévi, Indologists have not noticed the logical defect in their arguments? 1020 One after the other they have repeated the conclusion that the general thesis of Greek influence on the Indian theater must be rejected, even though they criticized, not the general thesis, but one or more specific theses. Non-Indologists — such as Paul Bernard, or before him W. W. Tarn — have noticed the error. Were the Indologists themselves unable to discern it?

In their defence one might observe that the Indologists concentrated their efforts most often on other possible explanations for the appearance of the Sanskrit theater. Some even added in so many words that, if the appearance of the Sanskrit theater can be explained on the basis of elements found in the earlier culture of India itself, it is not justified to resort to elements external to Indian culture. 1022 Once again, the logical force of this assertion is not clear. Since it is known that a literary theater existed on Indian soil during the period preceding the Sanskrit theater, it is hard to understand why this fact should be discarded as being ‘external’, and why it is not allowed to play a role in the appearance of the Sanskrit literary theater.

Several theories have been proposed in the hope of identifying the indigenous origins of the Sanskrit theater. Inevitably, many researchers have tried to find these origins in Vedic literature. Sylvain Lévi himself, in his Théâtre indien, went in this direction when re-interpreting an observation by Hermann Oldenberg regarding the subject matter of certain dialogue hymns of the Rgveda. According to Lévi, they display a kind of dramatic spectacle (p. 307). This suggestion has later been elaborated and commented by more recent Indologists, but has also evoked opposition. Other Indologists

1019 Jean Filliozat’s following remarks are interesting in this context (1947: 244, § 463): “le Nord-Ouest était une des régions où le sanskrit était le plus cultivé ..., ce qui le destinait à être adopté comme langue littéraire et scientifique. C’était aussi la région des invasions et par conséquent des idées antitraditionnelles, donc la région où l’on pouvait avoir le moins de scrupules à le profaner. ... Les satrapes d’Ujjayini semblent avoir contribué tout spécialement à achever de dégager le sanskrit de l’usage strictement brahmanique ... Il est probable que les souverains étrangers ont consacré la vague du sanskrit littéraire plutôt qu’ils ne l’ont suscitée.”

1020 Honesty obliges me to mention some partial exceptions: Keith 1924: 68 (“We cannot assuredly deny the possibility of Greek influence, in the sense that Weber admitted the probability”); Horsch 1966: 340 (“das indische Theater [ist] vom mimisch-formellen wie vom inhaltlichen Standpunkt autochthon ..., was eine sekundäre Beeinflussung in Einzelheiten nicht ausschliesst”); Thieme 1966a: 50-51 (“Wenn also das Mitspielen griechischer Vorbilder bei der Entwicklung des indischen ‘Mimus’ vorläufig nicht sicher nachweisbar ist, so muss doch andererseits zugegeben werden, dass es sich auch nicht ausschliessen läsdt”).

1021 Cp. Tarn 1951: 381-82: “The days when it could be suggested that the classical Sanscrit drama of the Gupta period was in any sense derived from the Greek drama are long past; no one now doubts that the Indian drama was a native growth precisely as the Greek drama was, though it may be matter of debate whether its origin was religious or secular, and what part was played by different elements. But the much-canvassed question of whether, during its formative period, it underwent any or what Greek influence is another matter.” Tarn is perhaps too generous with respect to the Indologists, by only retaining Bernard’s third option, without taking the second into consideration.

1022 E.g. Thieme 1966a: 51: “Nach Lage der Dinge muss die Last des Beweises bei denen ruhen, die griechischen Einfluss behaupten.”
rather look for the origins of the Sanskrit drama in popular layers of the population of ancient India, or in a combination of Vedic and popular elements.\footnote{For an overview and discussion of some positions, see Horsch 1966: 307-357. Renou (1963: XII) comments: “Éclairer l'évolution préhistorique du théâtre sanskrit par le folklore peut amener des comparaisons intéressantes: l'inconvénient est que l'originalité d'un art savant se trouve diluée dans l'anonymat des structures élémentaires. Le fait sanskrit, ici comme ailleurs, est d'abord un fait singulier.” Malamoud (1998) asks questions “non sur les traits védiques du théâtre mais sur la présence d'éléments spectaculaires, et, plus précisément, d'éléments dramatiques dans le rituel védique” (p. 27).}

One thing is certain in all this: so many years of research have not produced anything like a consensus. As Louis Renou (1963: XII-XIII) put it: “On n'a que l'embarras du choix, fait qui commande ... la prudence.”\footnote{Elsewhere in the same publication, Renou (1963: XVII) thinks that one should by all means leave aside the prehistory of the theater.} One has the impression that the debate has nowadays more or less come to an end, through exhaustion, without there being and definite result.

This takes us back to the question why Indologists have been almost unanimous in rejecting, or avoiding, the thesis of Greek influence. Here one can only speculate. Since the West tends to identify with early Greek culture, finding Greek influence in ancient India may be frowned upon as an expression of a colonial attitude. Moreover, many Indologists have a tendency to defend, or even proclaim, the originality of the culture they study.

Sylvain Lévi did not have this tendency. In 1890, the very year in which his Théâtre indien came out, he published and article called “Abel Bergaigne et l'indianisme”. Here he says the following about western influence on India (1890a: 11): “La vanité de l'Inde essaye en vain de dissimuler ses emprunts : l'astronomie porte la marque irréfragable des Grecs; la littérature et la religion laissent souperçonner une action profonde, mais difficile à préciser.”\footnote{He continues (1890a: 11): “En retour, la philosophie et la religion de l'Occident reçoivent manifestement l'empreinte des doctrines orientales. Plotin, Porphyre, l'école des néoplatoniciens reflètent la métaphysique de Kapila et de Patañjali; Manès et les gnostiques introduisent dans le christianisme l'esprit du brahmanisme et du bouddhisme, tandis qu'une colonie de Nestoriens apporte l'Évangile à l'Inde.”} We have already seen that in 1902 Lévi evoked, without hesitation, Greek influence to explain certain developments in Mahâyâna. Ten years later he had all the elements at hand to reevaluate his initial rejection of Greek influence on the Indian theater. Unfortunately we only know approximately what conclusions he drew from them. In a short preface that he wrote in 1914, he refers to the new discoveries and says (p. V): “Le problème souvent discuté des rapports entre le théâtre grec et le théâtre indien se pose ... sous un aspect nouveau, maintenant que nous trouvons le drame sanscrit fixé dans son cadre définitif longtemps avant Kâlidâsa.” At this occasion he said no more. However, in a course that he gave in 1919-1920 but which was not published until after his death (1938: 80 f.), he made some statements that should make us reflect. He mentions here the problem of Greek influence on India, and of Indian influence on Greece, then states that, “puisqu'il s'est trouvé dans l'Inde même un roi grec pour adhérer au bouddhisme, puisqu'il s'est trouvé dans l'Inde même un ambassadeur grec pour adhérer au bhâgavatisme, puisqu'il a existé dans l'Inde même des interprêtes officiels de chancellerie en possession d'un vocabulaire gréco-indien fixe et consacré, il
est bien permis de se demander, comme l’ont fait de bons esprits et des savants éprouvés, si ... le théâtre indien ne [doit] pas [sa] naissance à des modèles grecs ...”.

He then continues: “La discussion du problème nous entraînerait bien loin, je m’y suis mêlé autrefois avec la foudre de la jeunesse. Dans les deux camps, on a peut-être manqué de mesure; les uns ont trop affirmé, les autres trop nié.”

A few lines further down he explains: “L’Inde a pu avoir, même dès l’époque védique, des cérémonies, des rites, des fêtes où l’art dramatique avait une part, avec des acteurs chargés d’un rôle divin, héroïque, comique, avec des dialogues, des gestes, des danses, sans arriver jamais par elle-même à en dégager le drame, c’est à dire le développement dans un cadre régulier d’une action suivie, découpée dans un nombre fixe de portions en équilibre.” These lines show that by that time Lévi no longer supported as rigidly as before his own initial refutation of Greek influence on the Indian theater.

We learn from Louis Renou (1936: XVI) that Lévi, toward the end of his life, seemed ready to take on a second edition of his Théâtre indien. This second edition was not completed during his lifetime. According to Renou, Lévi would have added an annex on the dramas attributed to Bhāsa that were discovered in 1910, and perhaps a second one on the fragments of Buddhist dramas exhumed in 1911 by von Le Coq and published by Heinz Lüders. Renou does not mention a new reflection on Greek influence, and we have no clear indication to believe that Sylvain Lévi had thought of it. It is nonetheless attractive, and probably correct, to think that Lévi had realized that his only argument against the thesis of Albrecht Weber had been completely annihilated by the new discoveries, and that, in the form which Weber had given to it, the thesis of Greek influence on the Sanskrit theater still awaits its first serious criticism.
IV. CONCLUSIONS: HOW DID THE BRAHMINS WIN?

In an article that came out in 1990, Sheldon Pollock — who speaks of ‘Sanskrit discourse’ where we might prefer ‘Brahmanism’ — discusses some of its ‘concrete modes of domination’, “such … as caste hierarchy, untouchability, and female heteronomy” (p. 335). He then continues: “However, these may be surface ripples from deeper currents. It may be in a more intimate domain of general social and cultural practice that the real force and durability of Sanskrit discourse is located …” The ‘real force and durability’ of Brahmanical ideology is indeed an interesting and important subject for discussion, but the present book does not deal with it, at least not primarily. Here we have rather tried to address the question how this ideology succeeded in establishing itself, not how it subsequently succeeded in staying in place. Perhaps it would be justified to speak of the invention of a tradition — borrowing the expression from Hobsbawm & Ranger’s book (1983) — as opposed to the forces that kept it going.

The establishment and spread of Brahmanical ideology was intimately linked to the transition from Vedicism to Brahmanism and to the formative period of the latter. In this respect, the preceding chapters suggest the following tentative reconstruction (some parts more tentative than others).

It appears that the last century or two preceding Alexander's incursion into the subcontinent saw attempts, mainly concentrated in its northwestern regions, to re-organize Vedic texts and rituals as well as the structure of society. Among the results we may count the creation of the Padapātha of the Rgveda, the composition of the Śrutasūtras, and the imposition of the notion of four caste-classes (varṇa). Concerns with the preservation of the sacred language gave rise to the Sanskrit grammar of Pāṇini and to Yāska's Nirukta (even though this last work appears to be younger than Pāṇini and may therefore be more recent than Alexander).

Alexander's visit initiated important changes. Brahmins lost their privileged positions and became in some cases targets of persecution: Alexander killed many of them, Aśoka may have done the same, and invaders after the collapse of the Maurya Empire made life so miserable for Brahmins that some thought the end of time was near. Others were luckier, especially if they lived in one of the polities that, after the disappearance of the empire, were sympathetic to Brahmanism. The result was that the same centuries that brought misery to many Brahmins, especially those following the collapse of the Maurya Empire, also saw an upswing of Brahmanical literary production. Ritual was still central in part of this literature, but since traditional sponsoring had disappeared, the kind of ritual that was now discussed was different, too.

Globally speaking, it seems justified to say that Brahmanism as it then appeared was much more self-centered than its predecessor had been. It emphasized the self-sufficient nature of Brahmins, the private rituals they engage in, the isolated lifestyle they choose for themselves if they can, and the beginninglessness of all that relates to Brahmanism: the institution itself, the Veda from which they derive their authority, and the language of the Veda, which is also their means of communication. The Brahmanical vision of society and the state can be looked upon as an extension of this self-representation: Society and the state should be such that Brahmins can live the lives they are supposed to live. The supernatural powers that Brahmins claimed to possess provided extra encouragement for others to comply.

At this point we have to return to the question from which we began: How did the Brahmins win? Why did anyone pay attention to them and their self-imposed lifestyle, to
their claims of superiority and notions about the correct order of society? After all, they
did not have the military means to impose themselves. Nor was their success limited to
areas where they had a history of respect going back to the time they were priests with
close links to the court. Indeed, the contrary is true: most of the regions in South and
Southeast Asia had been without Brahmin priests and had no local traditions that
reserved a special position for them in society. Why weren’t they, and with them their
peculiar habits and ideas, simply ignored?

The first question to consider is how Brahmins actually spread over South and
Southeast Asia. How much do we know about this process? Very little, as it so happens.
But titbits of information can be culled from various sources, and our first task is to
briefly consider what picture can be derived from those sources.

Brahmins figure regularly in Buddhist canonical Sūtras. This may be taken as an
indication that they did sometimes — perhaps frequently — settle in regions that were
not brahmanized, i.e., in regions where the Brahmanical vision of society was not
generally recognized. For our present purposes it is interesting to see that some of these
Brahmins stayed in Brahmin villages (Pāli brāhmaṇagāma), while others had received a
village, a brahmadeyya. Both are sometimes mentioned in the same passage — as in the
Ambatītha Sutta and its Chinese parallels1026 — and it is clear that the two expressions are
not synonymous and do not normally both refer to the same village: in the Ambatītha
Sutta a brāhmaṇagāma named Icchānaṅkala is mentioned, and a brahmadeyya named
Ukkhaṭṭha. The brahmadeyya, in this particular case, was a gift of King Pasenadi of
Kosala. Brahmin villages (brāhmaṇaṅga) are very often referred to in the Sūtras,
brahmadeyyas less often.

There are good reasons to think that passages that refer to brahmadeyyas are
relatively late in the Buddhist canon.1027 We cannot take them as depicting the situation as
it prevailed at the time of the Buddha; they must indeed be assigned to a much more
recent date. Brahmin villages, on the other hand, appear to have existed, at least in that
part of the subcontinent, much before any king would gift land or a village to Brahmins.
At that time Brahmins apparently settled in villages of their own. The suggestion is that,
when moving into other regions, Brahmins did not mix with the local population in the
sense of finding a place to live in existing villages or towns. On the contrary, they
somehow created villages for their own exclusive use. We do not know how Brahmins in
their villages in foreign territory made a living: they may have worked the land or
survived by other means. This issue does not concern us at present. For our present
purposes it suffices to conclude that Brahmins, when they were not invited to a far-away
region, clustered together in villages they created for themselves. This is, of course, in
perfect agreement with the isolationist tendency that characterized Brahmanism, as we
saw in Part IIA.

Some additional information about the spread of Brahmins can be derived from
Vedic literature. Perhaps most striking is the story of King Māthava the Videgha told in
the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa (see Greater Magadha p. 6-7). At first sight it seems to tell us
how King Māthava conquered an eastern region, but closer inspection reveals that it does
no such thing. Here is what Witzel (1995b: 23) says about it:

1026 See McGovern 2013: 498 f.
1027 Greater Magadha p. 353 ff. (Appendix VI); McGovern 2013: § IV.4.3.
The famous Videgha Māṭhava legend of [Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa] 1.4.1.10 sqq. tells the story of the ‘civilization process of the East’ in terms of its Brahmanical authors, and not, as usually termed, as the tale of ‘the Aryan move eastwards’. For it is not only Videgha Māṭhava, a king living on the Sarasvatī, but also his priest Gotama Rāḥūgaṇa who move towards the east. Not only is the starting point of this ‘expedition’ the holy land of Kurukṣetra; the royal priest, Gotama Rāḥūgaṇa, is a well known poet of RgVedic poems as well, — and thus, completely anachronistic. Further, the story expressively mentions the role of Agni Vaiśvānara, the ritual fire, in making the marshy country of the East arable and acceptable for Brahmins. All of this points to Sanskritization (or rather, Brahmanization) and Kṣatriyization rather than to military expansion.

The Māṭhavas, about whom nothing is known outside the [Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa], may be identical with the māṭhai of Megasthenes (c. 300 B.C.), who places them East of the Pazālai (Paṅcāla), at the confluence of the Erēnnessis (Son) with the Ganges. The movement of some clans, with their king Videgha and his Purohitā, eastwards from the River Sarasvatī in Kurukṣetra towards Bihar thus represents the ‘ritual occupation’ of Kosala(-Videha) by the bearers of orthoprax (and orthodox) Kuru culture, but does not represent an account of the first settlement of the East by Indo-Aryan speaking tribes which must have taken place much earlier ...

What we learn from this is that Brahmins were hesitant to move to ‘impure’ regions. A legend like the one of King Māṭhava facilitated the process.

Better than a legend would be local rulers who made sure that the region of destination would fulfil all requirements. This may have frequently happened. It appears that ruler often invited Brahmins to a more or less remote kingdom. This accounts to a large extent for the spread of Vedic schools, and for the arrival of Brahmins in remote parts of the subcontinent and in Southeast Asia. But this takes us back to our initial question: Why should rulers be interested in Brahmins?

No simple and straightforward answers to questions like these are possible, of course. Historical developments are complex and unpredictable in the best of circumstances. The scarcity of detailed historical data in the case of Brahmanism adds to the difficulties that face those who wish to confront such questions.

And yet, one cannot observe a phenomenon like the spread of Brahmanism without asking how this could possibly happen. In spite of the risks this involves — and to avoid leaving this study incomplete — we will therefore briefly address the question: How could Brahmanism spread the way it did? What features of Brahmanism account for its incredible success? As stated above, full and complete answers to these questions are well beyond what we can reasonably expect. However, with a bit of luck we may be able to identify some of the mechanisms that played a role.

The first thing to observe is that royal courts appear to have played a central role in the spread of Brahmanism. This justifies us to return once again to a comparison with Christianity, in whose early spread, too, a royal or rather imperial court played a central role. Christianity was imposed onto the Roman Empire as a result of the conversion of its
emperor, Constantine.\textsuperscript{1028} Brahmanism was frequently introduced from above, but here the similarity ends. Brahmanism did not ‘have’ one single empire, nor did it have its ‘Constantine’. On the contrary, Brahmanism was introduced in numerous kingdoms of relatively limited size. And there is a further difference: Constantine converted to Christianity, but no king needed to convert to Brahmanism. Brahmanism is not the kind of thing you can convert to. Calling it a religion, as we know, is stretching the meaning of this term. It makes more sense to call it a socio-political ideology with a variable religious dimension. Indeed, a ruler, or anyone else, might combine sympathies for Brahmanism and, say, Buddhism. Inscriptions confirm that rulers could have such combined sympathies.\textsuperscript{1029}

If kings did not convert to Brahmanism, why did they bother to invite Brahmins and promote their vision of society? Why should they accept the claim that Brahmins are superior to everyone else, including the king himself? Why should they give gifts to Brahmins, often in the form of āgrahāras? What were such gifts expected to bring the donors? An answer that the inscriptions themselves propose is increase of merit. To some extent this begs the question. Why should a ruler wish to obtain the kind of merit that Brahmanism promises? They may have hoped for a good afterlife, to be sure. But clearly they had to believe first that gifts to Brahmins were the way to attain this. As usual with claims about the afterlife, there was no way to verify them. We may assume that rulers also expected more visible results from their largesse, such as magical protection for their kingdom and kingship. But even such practical expectations were built, and had to be built, on a reputation that preceded the Brahmins. Somehow it should be ‘known’ that the presence and support of Brahmins was good for a kingdom before a ruler would get involved with them.

How did Brahmins succeed in building such a reputation for themselves? The details of this process will probably forever remain hidden from us. We may surmise that pure chance played a role, followed, after initial successes, by a snowball effect. The early Buddhist texts create the impression that there were Brahmins traveling beyond their core area who put effort into promoting their vision of society to whoever was ready to listen. Most of the discussions of Brahmins with the Buddha — if the texts are to be believed — turned around the superiority of Brahmins. These Brahmins combined this missionary activity with certain services they provided to the population: the sages who predicted the future of the newly born Bodhisattva, for example, were Brahmins. Also other services that involved access to higher knowledge and higher powers were no doubt part of their arsenal.

The physical presence of Brahmins in regions that were not yet brahmanized may have been an essential contribution to the creation of a reputation that permitted their subsequent successes. But to some extent this still begs the question. Why should

\textsuperscript{1028} Frankopan (2015: 44) observes that “while Constantine is famous for being the Emperor who laid the basis for the Christianisation of Europe, it is never noted that there was a price for his embrace of a new faith: it spectacularly compromised Christianity’s future in the east.”

\textsuperscript{1029} For example, François Voegeli (private communication, 10.10.2012) draws my attention to the “case of the Ikṣvākus where the males of the dynasty were staunch supporters of Vedic ritual, whereas the females made loads of donations to the Buddhist community. This happened around Nāgārjunakoṇḍa (Andhra Pradesh; now unfortunately mostly under water after the building of a dam) between the 3\textsuperscript{rd} and 4\textsuperscript{th} centuries. It is documented in Epigraphia Indica Vol. 20, p. 1 f., Vol. 21, p. 61 f., Vol. 35, p. 1 f.”
Brahmins who had immigrated be given a special welcome if the locals had never heard of Brahmins? Somehow their reputation must have preceded their arrival.

Reputations can spread in various ways. One of these seems to me particularly important here: through stories. Stories — as McComas Taylor (2007: 183), citing Sheldon Pollock, reminds us — can present a world ordered by the discourse that renders social phenomena ‘permanent, predictable, and commonsensical’. The ‘social effect’ of such narrative, Taylor continues, is to strengthen these very perceptions. We know that already during the period dealt with in this book Brahmins succeeded in bringing many such stories into circulation. Many of these stories were, or became part of the Sanskrit epics, the *Mahābhārata* and the *Rāmāyaṇa*. These are epics about warriors and fighting, but one cannot read or hear them without being struck by the powerful Brahmanical figures in them. Stories that illustrate this Brahmanical power are numerous. One example must suffice. A story in the *Rāmāyaṇa* (2.84 ff.) tells how the Brahmanical sage Bharadvāja entertains King Bharata and his army.1030 To cut a long story short, Bharadvāja, with the help of some gods, offers the soldiers the best meal they ever ate, including meat and alcoholic drinks. Following that, there are pleasures for all the senses, including music and, last but not least, beautiful damsels: fifteen for each man. Not surprisingly, the soldiers have the time of their life, and express their intention never to return to the capital, nor to move on, saying: “This is heaven.” Bharata only gets his army back because Bharadvāja’s hospitality comes to an end the next day.

There are numerous other stories in the Sanskrit epics and elsewhere that emphasize Brahmanical power.1031 What Taylor (2007: 187) said about the *Pañcatantra* can, with the same or even more right, be said about the Sanskrit epics: “[They are] an emanation of brahmanical power, a social manifesto, at once the product and the producer of orthodox tradition, one of whose effects is to perpetuate the privileged position of one section of society to the disadvantage of another. [Their] effect is to ensure that the cultural world in which it circulates remains ‘permanent, predictable and commonsensical’. The effect of the regime of truth is to render invisible those practices which it employs to those ends.” The *Mahābhārata*, another author observed, “was a major and self-conscious intervention in the public imagination”.1032 But, contrary to what that author suggests, this intervention in the public imagination did not only concern ‘past and place in early South Asia’. Part of the collective imagination it imposed concerned the hierarchical nature of society along Brahmanical lines, and the special powers that inhere in Brahmins. This, no doubt, corresponded very much to the intentions of the authors and creators of these stories and epics.

Stories of the kind we find in the Sanskrit epics must be assumed to have spread. They must have been appreciated, and must have left in those who heard them the conviction that one should not cross Brahmins, and that it was always better to have them on one’s side. Stories imprinted (and “rendered invisible”), in the minds of those who heard them, ideas about Brahmins even if they had never met any. And the fact that great powers were imputed to Brahmins would not be lost on rulers, who would understand

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1030 See *Buddhism in the Shadow of Brahmanism* p. 93-94. Bharata is of course only a temporary replacement king.


1032 Hegarty 2012: 189.
that supporting Brahmans could only be to their advantage.

There was another circumstance that could only strengthen this understanding. Brahmanism in its own self-understanding was no new phenomenon, and had never been. Brahmanical literature is at pains to point out that it had been around for a long time. Theoreticians came to claim that, like the Veda and the Sanskrit language, the world had always been there, with Brahmans and all. The main events of the Mahābhārata and Rāmāyana, moreover, are situated in an imprecise but remote past. Quite apart from the main story, the Mahābhārata reminds its readers and listeners on numerous occasions that a Brahmin (Paraśurāma) had killed off all warriors, i.e. kings, seven times over because they had misbehaved. This presumably took place well before the main events of the Mahābhārata. Clearly Brahmanical power was superior to royal power, both in the past and in the present. It was in the interest of all to maintain good relationships with Brahmans.

What anyone could learn from these stories is that Brahmans pose a threat when crossed. But they can also be of great help. Once again history as presented by the Brahmans can illustrate this. The great Maurya Empire — which the modern historian may think of as a disaster for Brahmanism — had really been created by a Brahmin. The founder of this empire, Candragupta, had only succeeded in creating it by closely following the advice of his Brahmanical counsellor, Cāṇakya.1033 What is more, this same Cāṇakya, for all practical purposes the creator of the Maurya Empire, was also thought of as the author of the classical Sanskrit text on statecraft, the Arthaśāstra. The Brahmanical wisdom contained in this work, and much else, was at the disposition of rulers who were ready to appoint a Brahmin as chief advisor.

Clearly, risks could be avoided and advantages gained by pleasing Brahmans. To this one further advantage must be added: At least in theory, Brahmanical advisors do not aspire to kingship. Brahmans are therefore not only the most competent and most powerful advisors, they are also safe in the sense that they will not try to replace the king they advise.

Our reflections so far explain more or less why a king might wish to be assisted by Brahmanical advisors. It does not yet explain why he would reward Brahmans with agrahāras, sources of steady income away from the capital. Clearly agrahāras were often rewards for services rendered, but not only that. Many agrahāras, it appears from the inscriptions, were given to Brahmans who were not involved in the running of the state, but who excelled in this or that aspect of traditional Brahmanical learning. The recipients of agrahāras were supposed to live lives dedicated to ritual practice and Brahmanical learning, following the example of the Brahmanical sages in their hermitages (āśrama) depicted in the epics and elsewhere. This, as we have seen, was deemed to increase the merit of the donor or of those close to him. We may conjecture that kings somehow felt they could harness Brahmanical power in this way (even though I am not aware of any texts that explicitly put it this way).

All of this information could reach rulers (and others) through the stories that were presumably created by Brahmans but may subsequently have been told and retold by others. “The world’s priests and shamans knew what psychology would later confirm: if you want a message to burrow into a human mind, work it into a story.”1034 Referring to Hakemulder 2000, Gottschall (2012: 135) observes: “when it comes to moral law,

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1033 On the possible historical root of this story, see § I.1.1, above.
1034 Gottschall 2012: 118.
Shelley seems to have had it right: ‘Poets are the unacknowledged legislators of the world.’” We might speak, with Hogan (2009: passim), of emplotment, and recall his observation (p. 201): “[T]he most revealing and perhaps most socially consequential cases of emplotment are implicit rather than explicit, in part because those cases are not as readily open to self-conscious evaluation and inhibition. In other words, when we are unaware of the sources of our inferences, it is more difficult for us to be critical of those sources.” Through implicit emplotment, Brahmanical values found their way into the classical stories and treatises of Brahmanism, and through them into the minds of listeners.

Stories thus paved the way for Brahmins who moved to other regions, either invited by the king or simply on their own initiative. The stories emphasized the pure and restricted lifestyle of Brahmins, and newly arriving Brahmins could and would be identified on this basis. Shared stories can embody the fundamental values of a society, and stories that come to be shared are likely to shape the values of a society. Brahmanical stories — primarily the Mahābhārata and the Rāmāyana, but not only these — spread far and wide in the Indian subcontinent and in Southeast Asia. Modern Christian missionaries are not without knowing that telling a story — the story of Jesus, in this case — is a preferred way to make converts, and it is not impossible that martyrdom stories contributed to the success of early Christianity. Stories, once shared, play a role in developing a moral sense. If the morality expressed in the stories is Brahmanical morality, the Brahmanical vision of society is likely to gain a foothold and spread among those who listen to them. This is what happened in South and Southeast Asia, and its effects on the political, cultural and religious history of those regions was extraordinary.

1035 Gottschall 2012: 137-138: “Story … continues to fulfill its ancient function of binding society by reinforcing a set of common values and strengthening the ties of common culture. Story enculturates the youth. It defines the people. It tells us what is laudable and what is contemptible. … Story — sacred and profane — is perhaps the main cohering force in human life.” “[F]iction seems to be more effective at changing beliefs than nonfiction” (p. 150). “If the research is correct, fiction is one of the primary sculpting forces of individuals and societies” (p. 153).


1037 See the Keynote address to the Asian Mission Congress by Bishop Tagle (2006), and his reference to Pope John Paul II’s Ecclesia in Asia; further Naugle 1999.

1038 Boyd 2009: 197.
APPENDIXES

Appendix I: Brahmins and Śramaṇas

Āśoka’s thirteenth Rock Edict states that “there is no country where these (two) classes (nīkāya), (viz.) the Brahmins and the Śramaṇas, do not exist, except among the Greeks (yona)” 1039 Can we conclude from this that there were Brahmins as well as Śramaṇas in all ‘countries’, i.e., presumably, in all parts of Āśoka’s empire?

Such a conclusion may not be justified. It appears that the expression ‘Brahmins and Śramaṇas’, or ‘Śramaṇas and Brahmins’, was used as a single expression that referred to all those who were either Brahmins or Śramaṇas. 1040 In concrete terms, this would mean that Āśoka’s statement implies that there were either Brahmins or Śramaṇas in all parts of his empire, but not necessarily both at the same time. Conceivably there were ‘countries’ with Brahmins but without Śramaṇas, and others with Śramaṇas but without Brahmins. Clearly, Āśoka’s testimony must be dealt with with much care.

What reason is there to look upon the expression ‘Brahmins and Śramaṇas’ in this manner? Note to begin with that Āśoka’s inscriptions often refer to Brahmins and Śramaṇas together, but never to Śramaṇas separately, and only occasionally to Brahmins. 1041

Then there is the observation by the grammarian Patañjali (after 150 BCE) that the two terms form a singular neuter compound śramaṇabrāhmanam, presumably because they are in constant opposition to each other. 1042 For our present purposes the crucial fact is that, also in Patañjali’s time and culture, Brahmins and Śramaṇas were apparently frequently referred to together, so much so that this specific compound had come into existence.

This same compound, but not this time in the singular neuter but rather in the plural masculine (samaṇabrahmaṇā / samaṇamāhaṇā), is frequent in the Pāli Buddhist and in the Śvetāmbara Jaina canons. This confirms once again that the two, Śramaṇas and Brahmins, were often thought of together, as together constituting one group. Here, as in the case of the inscriptions of Āśoka, the question comes up: do references in the Pāli canon to ‘Śramaṇas and Brahmins’ necessarily concern collections of individuals among which there are at least some Śramaṇas and some Brahmins? At least one passage in the Pāli canon shows that they do not.

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1040 Anālayo (2009: 155) quotes Dutt (1962: 49): ”Samaṇa-Brāhmaṇa, in Asoka’s edicts it appears as Brāhmaṇa-samaṇa, a plausible explanation of which is that ... those who belong themselves to the Samaṇa class ... wished to give it precedence [in their texts], while the Brāhmaṇa is put first in the edicts”. Anālayo himself thinks “that the sequence of such listings may not always have been invested with as much importance as nowadays assumed”. Note further that Patañjali, a Brahmanical author, cites the compound as śramaṇa-brāhmaṇa, in this order; see below.
1041 Brahmins on their own are mentioned in Rock Edict 5 (Bloch 1950: 104) and in an isolated Minor Rock Edict in Ėṛṛagudi (Bloch 1950: 151).
1042 Mahā-bh I p. 476 l. 9 (under P. 2.4.12 vt. 2): yeṣāṁ ca virodha ity asyāva kaśāḥ/ śramaṇabrāhmaṇam/ l. 11-12: cakārarakaraṇasya prayojanam yeṣāṁ ca virodhaḥ śāśvatiskas teṣāṁ dvandva ekacacanam eva vathā syāt.
This passage occurs in the Devadaha Sutta of the Majjhima Nikāya. Here the Buddha is presented as attributing to ‘some Śramaṇas and Brahmins’ a position which no Brahmin at the time is likely to have held, but which the passage itself attributes to Jainas. Jaina ascetics certainly were Śramaṇas, they were not Brahmins. The passage reads as follows:

Santi, bhikkhave, eke samanabrāhmaṇā evam-vādino evam-diṭṭhino: yam kiṁcāyaṁ purisa-puggalo paṭiṣamvedeti, sukham vā dukkham vā adukkhamasukhaṁ vā, sabban taṁ pubbekatahetu; iti purāṇānaṁ kammānaṁ tapasā vyantibhāvä, navānaṁ kammānaṁ akaraṇā āyatiṁ anavassavo, āyatiṁ anavassavā kammakkhayo, kammakkhayā dukkhhakkhayo, dukkhhakkhayā vedanākkhayo, vedanākkhayā sabbaṁ dukkhaṁ nijjīṇaṁ bhavissati’ti. Ēvaṁvādino, bhikkhave, Niganṭha.

Bhikkhus, there are some Śramaṇas and Brahmins (samanabrāhmaṇā) who hold such a doctrine and view as this: “Whatever this person feels, whether pleasure or pain or neither-pain-nor-pleasure, all that is caused by what was done in the past. So by annihilating with asceticism past actions and by doing no fresh actions, there will be no consequence in the future. With no consequence in the future, there is the destruction of action. With the destruction of action, there is the destruction of suffering. With the destruction of suffering, there is the destruction of feeling. With the destruction of feeling, all suffering will be exhausted.” So speak the Niganṭhas, bhikkhus.

The ‘Śramaṇas and Brahmins’ referred to in this passage are, as is clear from the passage itself, Jainas.

Another interesting passage is the question addressed by the wanderer (paribbājaka) Subhadda to the dying Buddha, which has the following shape:

ye 'me bho Gotama samanabrāhmaṇā samghino ganino ganacariyā nātā yassassino titthakaraṇa sādhusammatā ca bahujanassa, seyyathidham Pūraṇo Kassapo, Makkhali Gosālo, Ajita-Kesakambali, Pakudho Kaccāyano, Sañjaya Belaṭṭha-putto, Niganṭha Nāṭaputta, sabbe te sakāya paṭiṇṇaya abbhaṅgamsu, sabbe ’va na abbhaṅgamsu, ekacce abbhaṅgamsu ekacce na abbhaṅgamsūtī?

Venerable Gotama, all those Śramaṇas and Brahmins (samanabrāhmaṇā) who have orders and followings, who are teachers, well-known and famous as founders of schools, and popularly regarded as saints, like Pūraṇa Kassapa, Makkhali Gosālo, Ajita Kesakambali, Pakudha Kaccāyana, Sañjaya Belatṭhaputta and the Niganṭha Nāṭaputta — have they all realised the truth as they all make out, or have none of them realised it, or have some realised it and some not?

The names enumerated are those of the six heretics frequently mentioned in the Pāli canon, and prominently in the Samañña-phala Sutta of the Dīgha Nikāya (DN I p. 47 ff.). Samañña means Śramaṇaship, so that it is clear that the teachers figuring in it are Śramaṇas. In other words, there are once again no Brahmins among the “Śramaṇas and

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1045 See, e.g., Basham 1951: 10 ff.
Brahmins” of this passage. Why then are they called ‘Śramaṇas and Brahmins’? Clearly this expression globally refers to wanderers, without any guarantee that there are Brahmins among them. The beginning of the Sāmaññaphala Sutta is interesting in the present context. King Ajātasatru is here presented as expressing the wish to visit a Śramaṇa or a Brahmin. Only Śramaṇas figure in the remainder of the Sutta.

Of the three passages from the Pāli canon considered above, the first one is crucial in the present context, because it ascribes to ‘Śramaṇas and Brahmins’ a position which, to the best of our knowledge, no Brahmin held at that time.

So what can we conclude from the Aśokan inscription cited above? We cannot conclude from it that there were both Brahmins and Śramaṇas in all parts of the Maurya Empire. This is interesting, because it implies that we cannot conclude from this inscription that there were Brahmins in all parts of the Maurya Empire. Indeed, there are good reasons to think that Brahmins did not reach certain parts of this area until late, often later than the arrival of Buddhism and/or Jainism. The Aśokan inscription could, in this respect, be a source of confusion. We now know that it should not be.

The inscription further states that there were neither Śramaṇas nor Brahmins among the Greeks at the time of Aśoka. We may assume that the Greek parts of the Maurya Empire were meant, or perhaps the Hellenistic kingdoms to its west. Aśokan inscriptions in Greek have been found in Kandahar. It is hard to believe that Gandhāra (or ‘Greater Gandhāra’) was considered Greek by Aśoka. This region had been a centre of Brahmanical culture not long before Aśoka, and presumably continued to be one under his rule. Moreover, Buddhists are believed to have settled in this region under Aśoka. In other words, there may have been both Brahmins and Śramaṇas in Gandhāra at that time. Furthermore, under Maurya rule Gandhāra was not Greek in a political sense.

Appendix II: Vedic and para-Vedic texts on the Śunaskarṇa sacrifice

The Pañcaviṃśa (or Tāṇḍya Mahā) Brāhmaṇa contains the following passage (17.12.1 & 5-6):

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1046 DN I p. 47: Kaṁ nu kh’ajja samanam vā brāhmaṇam vā payirupāseyyām, yaṁ no payirupāsato cittaṁ pasīdeyyāti. “Can we not today visit some Śramaṇa or Brahmin, to visit whom would bring peace to our heart?” tr. Walshe 1987: 91, modified.


1048 Karttunen (1997: 31) observes: "we may suppose that the settlers in Alexander’s probably small Indian foundations were no happier than those in Bactria. In the end, Bactria and Arachosia remained Greek (in the sense that they contained a sedentary Greek population), but we have no corresponding evidence for India. In later times Bucephala seems to have existed, but it might well have been a refoundation by the Indo-Greeks." A recent genetic analysis also covers the Kalash in northwestern Pakistan, "whose strongest signal suggests a major admixture event (990 to 210 BCE) from a source related to present-day Western Eurasians, although we cannot identify the geographic origin precisely. This period overlaps that of Alexander the Great (356 to 323 BCE), whose army, local tradition holds, the Kalash are descended from ..., but these ancient events predate recorded history in the region, precluding confident interpretation." (Hellenthal et al 2014: 751).
trivṛt agniṣṭomaḥ sa sarvasvāro yaḥ kāmayetā 'nāmayatā 'muṇ lokam iyāṁ iti sa etena yajeta (1)
...
ārbhavapavamāne stūyamāna audumbaryā dakṣīṇā prāvṛto nipadyate tad eva saṃgacchate (5)
dakṣīṇā prāvṛto nipadyate (5)

Caland (1931) translates this as follows:

A nine-versed agniṣṭoma; this is throughout circumflexed. He who wishes: ‘May I go to yonder world not through any disease’, should perform this (rite). (1)
...
Whilst the ārbhava-pavamāna(-laud) is being chanted, he (the Sacrificer) lies down, he head being covered by his uppergarment, to the south of the pillar of udumbara-wood. Then, he meets (his end). (5)
This is the stoma of Śunaskarna. This sacrifice was performed by Śunaskarna, the son of Baskika; hence it is called Śunaskarna's stoma. (6)

The crucial part is section 5. Does it tell us that the sacrificer enters the fire? The formulation of section 5 is too ambiguous to draw a conclusion, but it is hard to imagine that the death of the sacrificer can be scheduled so precisely without some way to speed it up.

The Hiranyakeshi Śrautasūtra (17.3.18-23) has the following:

trivṛt 'gniṣṭomaḥ/ (18)
śunaskarṇaṣtomaḥ/ sarvasvāraḥ/ (19)
maraṇakāmo yajeta yaḥ kāmayetānāmayataṁ svargaṁ lokam iyāṁ iti vijñāyate/ (20)
yāmyaḥ pasūḥ śukaharita upālambhyah/ (21)
kṛtānma daksīṇā/ (22)
ārhave stūyamāne daksīṇenaudumbarīṁ ahatena vāsasā pattodaśena prāvṛtya
daksīṇāśiṁrā samviśiṁti brāhmaṁaṁ saṁpayatam etam yajñam iti/ yajñasamasthāṁ anu saṁtiṣṭhate/ (23)

The Kātyāyana Śrautasūtra does not mention the name Śunaskarna, but the following passage clearly deals with the same sacrifice (22.6.1-6):

maraṇakāmasya sarvasvāraḥ/ (1)
kṛtānma daksīṇā/ (2)
dikśādy avajīghraty eva bhaksān/ (3)
apsv avaharanam asomāṇāṁ/ (4)
ārhave stūyamāne daksīṇenaudumbarīṁ kṛṣṇajiṁ samviśiṁti daksīṇāśiṁrā prāvṛtyah/ (5)
tad eva mriyate/ (6)

Caland adds in a note: "Śāyana supplies to anāyamatā (should no doubt be anāmayamatā, JB) the noun dehena: 'With a not sick body.'"
Ranade (1978: 570) translates:

The Sarvasvāra Soma sacrifice (which is the fourth of the four Trivṛt sacrifices) is meant for one who is desirous of having a (successful) end to his life. (1)
Food cooked properly is the priestly fee for the Sarvasvāra sacrifice. (2)
From the Dīkṣāṇīya īṣṭī onwards the Sacrificer consumes his ỉḍā-portion (just) by smelling. (3)
The ỉḍā-portions of the Sacrificer excepting those of the Soma-juice are then to be thrown away into the water. (4)
The Sacrificer lies down on a black-antelope skin to the south covered with a cloth while the Ārbhava-pavamāṇa sāman is chanted (in the evening session). (5)
(And) he dies at that time. (6).

Both the Hiranyakeśī and the Kātyāyana Śrāutasūtra use the word samviṣati, similar to Śabara's viṣati; both these words can mean ‘enter’. But whereas Śabara's viṣati has an object (agniṁ viṣati; "he enters the fire"), the two Śrāutasūtras don't, so that here the other possible translation for samviṣati ("he lies down") has to be preferred.
The Āpastamba Śrāutasūtra describes the sacrifice as follows (22.7.20-25):

caturthah sarvasārah śunaskarṇastomaḥ/ (20)
marañkāmo yajeta yah kāmayetānāmāyatā svargam lokam iyāṁ iti/ (21)
yāmyah paśuḥ śukaharita upālambhyah/ (22)
krīṇāmaṃ daksināḥ/ (23)
ārīhave stūyamāne daksinenaudumbarīṃ pattodaśenāhatena vāsasā daksināśirāḥ prāvṛtīḥ samviṣann āha brāhmaṇ[āḥ] samāpayata me yajñam iti/ (24)
tadaiva saṃtiṣṭhate/ (25)

Thite (2004: 1314-1315) translates:

The fourth (nine-versed Ekāha) is the Śunaskarṇastoma in which all the Sāmans are circumflexed at the end (sarvasvāra). (20)
A sacrificer desirous of death and one who desires "May I go to heaven without having any disease" should perform (this sacrifice). (21)
In addition to the Savaṇīya he-goat a yellowish parrot is to be seized as a victim. (22)
Cooked rice (forms) the sacrificial gift. (23)
When the Ārbhava-pavamāṇa (stotra) is being sung, (the sacrificer) lying down to the south of the Audumbarā (post) with his head to the south and being covered with a new garment the fringes of which should be towards the feet, says: "O Brahmins! Complete the sacrifice for me". (24)
At that moment only, the sacrifice stands completely established (i.e. concluded). (25)

Caland (1928: 320-321) translates the same passage as follows:

1050 This translation omits audumbarīṃ ("to the south of the pillar of Udumbara wood") and daksināśirāḥ ("with the head pointing to the south").

The Jaiminiya Brāhmaṇa (2.267) mentions the Šunaskarna, but provides few details:

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\text{athaisa śunaskarṇastomaḥ/ śunaskarna ha vai vāṛṣṇyakah (v.l. vāṣkyakah) punyakrod āpāpakrod āśa/ sa ha cakame — punyam evāmin loke kṛtvāpāpaṃkrtya svargaṃ lokam gaccheyam iti/ sa etāṃ yajñāṃ apasyat/ tam āharat/ tenāvajata/ tato vai sa punyam evāmin loke kṛtvāpāpaṃkrtya svargaṃ lokam agacchati/ sa yah punyakrit kāmayeta punyam evāmin loke kṛtvāpāpaṃkrtya svargaṃ lokam gaccheyam iti, sa etena yajeta/ punyam evāmin loke kṛtvāpāpaṃkrtya svargaṃ lokam gacchati/}
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About this sacrifice in the Baudhāyana Śrautasūtra, Caland (1903: 28) says the following:


1051 [Caland’s note:] XXI. 17.
1052 [Caland’s note:] Im Pāńc. Br. heisst er Sohn des Baśkīha.
1053 [Caland’s note:] Wenn adhonivitti zu lesen ist. Diese Tracht der Opferschnur ist bekanntlich die beim Pitṛmedha beim Hinaustragen der Leiche üblich.
The quoted passage is as follows (Baudhāyana Śrautasūtra 18.48):

śunaskarno ha vai saivyo rājā punyakṛd bahuyāy āṣa/
sa ha pāpyāḥ janaṁ ātriḥ pratiḥikyāyartvijāḥ papracchāsti svit sa
yajñakratur yenāḥam iṣṭvaiva prayāyām iti/
asti hiṁ hainaṁ rtvijāḥ pratyācyuḥ/
tasmā adhāvijyur ayoṁ apurorukkān grahān jagrāḥa/
svaṁy udgātā sāmāṇya anaiḍāṇy anidhanāṇi/
parāṁ evargmiyaṁ hoṭānuvāca/
sa hāvabhṛthād evodetya mamāra/
yām dvīṣyāt tasyaivām yajñāṁ kuryād upasṛtām vā yājayet/
kiṣpaṛam haivāsmāl lokāt pratīt/

Kashikar (2003: III: 1243) translates:

King Śunaskarna, son of Śibi was benevolent and had performed many sacrifices. Perceiving the people in poor and wretched condition, he asked the priests, "Is there any sacrifice, having performed which I would depart?" "Yes, there is one" the priests replied. The Adhvaryu took for him the Soma-draughts without reciting the formula referring to its birth-place and without the Puroruc. The Udgāt chanted the Svarasāmans without the stobha īḍa and without the Nidhana. The Hotṛ recited the set of Rks consecutively. After having returned from the Avabhṛtha, the sacrificer died. One should perform this sacrifice for one who hates, or one who approaches him (for this purpose). Soon he departs from this world.

The following, too, occur in the Baudhāyana Śrautasūtra (26.33):

athāśmiṁ chunaskarnayajye
tilamiśram aśītvā matsyāṁ khāditvā ksāramātram pibet
atha sāmapathe sāṃviṣet
svapnād eva svapne gacchati

Kashikar (2003: IV: 1713) translates:

In this Śunaskarṇa sacrifice the sacrificer should eat food mixed with sesame, should eat fish and drink only salt water. He should lie down in the region destined for Sāman-chanting. He becomes asleep and attains (permanent) sleep.

Finally there is the Lātyāyana Śrautasūtra (8.8.1 & 5-6):\(^{1054}\)

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\(^{1054}\) Drāhyāyana Śrautasūtra 23.4.1 & 5-6 is the same, with this difference that sutra 5 here reads: āróbhave pavamāṇe stūyanāmā daksinenaudumbarīṁ kṛṣṇājinaṁ upāstīra daksīnaśirāṁ prāvṛto nipadyate/tad eva saṃgacchate/ tad eva mriyate iti/
sarvasvāraṇa yakṣyamāṇo dīkṣāprabhṛti prayateta yathā sautye ’hani preyām iti/ (1)

... ārbhave pavamāṇe stūyasāṇa udumbaryā daksinā prāvrto nipadyeta kṛṣṇājinam upastīrya daksināśirās tad eva samgacchate tad eva mriyata iti/ (5)
evam mṛtam yajamānān havirbhīḥ soha rīṣair yajñapātraś cāhavanīye prahṛtya pravrajeyur iti śāṇḍilyaḥ/ (6)

Ranade (1998: 838-841) translates:

One who is going to perform the Sarvasvāra (trivṛt agniṣṭoma) sacrifice, should make efforts from the consecration ceremony thinking "I will proceed to the yonder world on the day of pressing". (1)

... When the Āṛbhava pavamāna is being chanted he should lie covered to the south of the Audumbarī post on a black-antelope skin, having spread the same, with his head to the south. Thus itself he makes his departure. This is the way he breaths his last. (5)
Śāṇḍilya opines that they (the officiating priests) should consign the sacrificer, who is thus dead, to the Āhavanīya fire along with the remaining oblations inclusive of the sacrificial utensils containing the residue of the Soma and quit the place. (6)

This is the only passage that indicates that the sacrificer is dead before he is consigned to the fire, and this passage (but only this one) is therefore in clear disagreement with the passage quoted by Śabara.

Appendix III: Manu's final chapter

A crucial element in the ideologies of the eastern Ganges valley was the belief in karmic retribution and the possibility of liberation from the resulting cycle of rebirths. A particularly striking feature of the Māṇava Dharmaśāstra is that its final chapter, no. 12, deals with the law of karma.1055 Olivelle looks upon verses 1-106 of this chapter as genuine, and presents the remaining verses 108-126 (verse 107 is a transitional verse) as ‘excursus’. However, even about the ‘genuine’ part of chapter 12 he voices doubts (2005: 60).1056

Chapter 12 poses unique problems because it is so very different from the rest of the work. It begins with the seers making one final request of Bṛghu to teach them the law of karma. One is tempted to see this entire chapter as deriving from the work of redactors. There is, however, no clear evidence that it did not belong to the original work of Manu; we cannot detect the breaks in the line of discussion that we detected in other interpolated passages or the violation of structure that Manu has laid out.

1055 Ludo Rocher (1980) deals with this chapter.
As was pointed out above, redactors do not see it as their task to introduce “breaks in the line of discussion” or “violation of structure”. Absence of these shortcomings is therefore no proof of genuineness. As it is, it may be interesting to compare the contents of chapter 12 with those of the remainder of the ‘genuine’ Mānava Dharmaśāstra.

At first sight the remarks about karmic retribution in chapter 12 are not fundamentally different from those in the preceding chapters. Both enumerate the results of various activities in future lives, chapter 12 systematically in one short chapter, the remainder of the Mānava Dharmaśāstra here and there, and less elaborately. These earlier chapters mention mainly negative karmic consequences, and they do not give the impression that karmic retribution preoccupied the mind of their author(s) to an excessive degree. 1057 Heaven and hell are at least as often invoked, and not just as stages one passes through before a next rebirth. 1058 A particularly striking example is verse 11.241, which promises heaven (dīv) to insects, snakes, moths, animals, birds, and immobile creatures “by the power of ascetic toil” (tapobalāt). Had the frame of reference here been rebirth as determined by karmic retribution, more variety might have been on offer for these unfortunate creatures, including, for example, birth as a Brahmin. Verse 8.75, to take another example, tells us that a false witness “after death will plunge headlong into hell and suffer the loss of heaven” (avān narakam evaiti pretya svargāc ca hiyate). Once again the impression is created that there is nothing in between these two extremes. Heaven, rather than a multiplicity of possibilities, is assumed as the normal outcome of human life in verse 8.103, which states that a man who, even though he knows the truth, gives evidence in lawsuits contrary to the facts for a reason relating to the Law, does not fall from the heavenly world. 1059 Unjust punishment, we learn from verse 8.127, is an obstacle to heaven for the king who inflicts it; the very next verse specifies what that implies: the king who punishes those who do not deserve to be punished and neglects to punish those who deserve it, will go to hell. 1060

It would yet be difficult to conclude on these grounds alone that chapter 12 must have a different author; this last chapter presents itself after all as offering the “determination with respect to engagement in action” (Manu 12.2: karmayogasya nirnayam). There is however a difference between chapter 12 and the rest of the Mānava Dharmaśāstra which may be significant. Unlike the remainder of the treatise, chapter 12 presents human life as the result of deeds performed in earlier lives. This idea is absent from the earlier chapters. And yet, this would have been a useful and perhaps convincing justification for the great differences between human beings that the Mānava Dharmaśāstra proclaims. Brahmins, it may be recalled, are far superior to all other humans. It would be a fair question to ask why it is like this. Karmic retribution would provide an answer, but the Mānava Dharmaśāstra (with the exception of chapter 12) does

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1057 The situation is further confused by the fact that Manu 9.8-9 maintains that a man is born again in his wife. According to Manu 9.107 it is through his eldest son that a man obtains immortality (ānanta); according to Manu 9.137 it is through his grandson that this happens.

1058 One gains a good first impression by looking up the references to ‘heaven’ and ‘hell’ in Olivelle’s index to his translation (2004: 302; 2005: 1119).

1059 Manu 8.103a-c: tad vadan dharmato ‘rtheṣu jānam apy anyathyā naraḥ/ na svargāc cyavate lokād ....

1060 Manu 8. 128ab & d: adaṇḍyān daṇḍayan rājā daṇḍyāṁś caivāpy adaṇḍayan/ ... narakam caiva gacchatū/.
not offer it.\textsuperscript{1061}

Consider first chapter 12. The very first verse that explains the fruits of action reads (Manu 12.3):\textsuperscript{1062}

Action produces good and bad results and originates from the mind, speech, and the body. Action produces the human conditions — the highest, the middling, and the lowest.

Details about how to become a human being, and a Brahmin in particular, are found in the section on the three Attributes (\textit{guna}), viz. Goodness (\textit{sattva}), Vigour (\textit{rajas}) and Darkness (\textit{tamas}), i.e. Manu 12.24-53. We read there (Manu 12.40):\textsuperscript{1063}

Those who possess Goodness become gods; those who possess Vigour become humans; and those who possess Darkness always become animals — that is the threefold course.

And lest there be confusion as to the category to which Brahmins and their likes belong, verse 48 specifies that they are associated with Goodness, the Attribute of gods:\textsuperscript{1064}

Hermits, ascetics, Brahmins, divine hosts in celestial chariots, asterisms, and Daityas — these constitute the first course related to Goodness.

Turning now to the other chapters of the \textit{Mānava Dharmaśāstra}, what justification does it offer for the social inequalities it preaches? An answer is provided by the following passage (Manu 1.28-30):\textsuperscript{1065}

As they are brought forth again and again, each creature follows on its own the very activity (\textit{karman}) assigned to it in the beginning by the Lord. Violence or non-violence, gentleness or cruelty, righteousness (\textit{dharma}) or unrighteousness (\textit{adharma}), truthfulness or untruthfulness — whichever he assigned to each at the time of creation, it stuck automatically to that creature. As at the change of seasons each season automatically adopts its own distinctive marks, so do

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{1061} The Buddhist canon does offer it. \textit{Majjhima Nikāya} No. 129, for example, says, in the paraphrase of Schmithausen (1986: 209) “that the evil-doer, if perchance reborn as a human being, is reborn in a low caste (as a Caṇḍāla, etc.: MN III 169), whereas the person who has accumulated good karma is, after his return from heaven, reborn as a Kṣatriya or Brahmin, etc. (MN III 177).”
  \item \textsuperscript{1062} Manu 12.3: \textit{śubhāśubhapalāṃ karma manovāgdehasambhavam/ karmajā gatayo nṛṇām uttamādhamamadhyamāḥ//}. Here and in what follows, I follow (unless otherwise indicated) the translation presented in Olivelle 2004.
  \item \textsuperscript{1063} Manu 12.40: \textit{devatāṃ sāttvikā yānti manusya-tvaṃ tu rājasāḥ/ tiryaktaṃ tāmasā nityam ity esā trividhā gatiḥ//}.
  \item \textsuperscript{1064} Manu 12.48: \textit{tāpasaḥ yatayo viprā ye ca vaimānikā gaṇāḥ/ nakṣatrāṇi ca daityāś ca prathamā sāttvikā gatiḥ//}.
  \item \textsuperscript{1065} Manu 1.28-30: \textit{yāṃ tu karmanī yasmin sa nyayukta prathamaṃ prabhuh/ sa tad eva svayam bheje sriyamānah punāḥ punah// hiṃsārāḥsmre mrudkrāre dharmādharanāv rātre// yad yasya so 'dadhāt sarge tat tasya svayam āviśat// yathartulingāṇī rāvah svayam evartuparyaye/ svāni svāny abhiḍaṇante tathā karmāṇi dehinaḥ//}.
\end{itemize}
embodied beings adopt their own distinctive acts (karman).

The status of Brahmans, which is associated with the activity assigned to them, is due to a decision of the creator. It is in this way that the status of a Brahmin is never described as due to previous deeds, and indeed, unless something goes seriously wrong, a Brahmin will remain a Brahmin forever:

a Brahmin’s birth in the Veda is everlasting, both here and in the hereafter.\textsuperscript{1066} and

the birth that a teacher who has fathomed the Veda brings about according to rule by means of the Śāvitrī verse — that is his true birth, that is not subject to old age and death.\textsuperscript{1067}

To the general rule according to which the Mānava Dharmaśāstra in its first eleven chapters does not invite the doctrine of karmic retribution to explain the present state of human beings, there are some possible exceptions. The text occasionally uses the expression pūrvakṛta, either in contrast with daiva ‘fate’ (7.166; 11.47) or with duścarita “bad deeds committed in this world” (11.48). This suggests that pūrvakṛta here means “deeds performed in a previous life”. These past deeds (they are always sins, it seems) are invoked to explain some otherwise inexplicable negative features of a person. This is summed up in 11.54cd: “for individuals whose sins have not been expiated are born with detestable characteristics” (nindyair hi lakṣaṇair yuktā jāyante ‘niṣkṛtaṁvasah).\textsuperscript{1068} Immediately preceding this line are the words “Therefore, one should always do penances to purify oneself” (caritavyam ato niyam prāyaścitāṁ viśuddhayate). This shows that the threat of the negative consequences of one’s deeds in a next life (a ‘foreign’ belief) was used to encourage the properly Vedic penances, some of which might end in death. Nowhere in the Mānava Dharmaśāstra (with the exception of chapter 12) are the positive consequences of one’s deeds used to explain the superior status of Brahmans and other twice-born people. This is all the more remarkable in view of the fact that a text such as the Chāndogya Upaniṣad had explicitly linked the status of Brahmans to good deeds done in an earlier life.\textsuperscript{1069}

\textsuperscript{1066} Manu 2.146cd: brahmajanama hi viprasya pretya ceha ca sāśvatam.
\textsuperscript{1067} Manu 2.148: ācāryas tv asya yāṃ jātiṃ vidhivad vedapāragah/ utpādayati sāvitrī śā satyā sājarāmarā//.
\textsuperscript{1068} See also Manu 1.49-50: tamasā bahurūpeṇa veṣṭītāḥ karmahetunā/ antahṣamjñā bhavanvte ete sukhaduhkhasamanvitāḥ// etadantās tu gatayo brahmādāyāḥ samudāhṛtāḥ/ ghore ’smīn bhūtasamsāre niyam satatayāyānī// “Wrapped in a manifold darkness caused by their past deeds, these [plants and animals?] come into being with inner awareness, able to feel pleasure and pain. In this dreadful transmigratory cycle of beings, a cycle that rolls on inexorably for ever, these are said to represent the lowest condition, and Brahμā the highest.” These verses occur in a passage which Olivelle has identified as an “excursus”, i.e., a later addition; moreover, they do not directly concern the present state of human beings.
\textsuperscript{1069} ChāndUp 5.10.7: tad ya iha ramaṇīyacarāṇā abhyāśo ha yat te ramaṇīyām yonim āpadye rvan brahmānayānīm vā kṣatriyayānīm vā vaśiyayānīm vā. “Now, people here whose behavior is pleasant can expect to enter a pleasant womb, like that of a woman of the Brahmin, the Kṣatriya, or the Vaiśya class.” Ed. tr. Olivelle.
Manu 10.42 makes the following statement about low caste human beings:1070

By the power of austerity and semen, in each succeeding generation they attain here among men a higher or a lower station by birth.

This verse is enigmatic, in that it does not state in so many words that it deals with karmic consequences of deeds. Assuming that it does, it is interesting, and no doubt significant, to observe that this one exception (if it is one) concerns humans of low and mixed castes, people far removed from the high positions that the Brahmans claimed for themselves.

The following verses, too, might be thought of as an exception to the general rule:1071

He should reflect on the diverse paths humans take as a result of their evil deeds; on how they fall into hell; on the tortures they endure in the abode of Yama; on how they are separated from the ones they love and united with the ones they hate; on how they are overcome by old age and tormented by diseases; on how the inner self departs from this body, takes births again in a womb, and migrates through tens of billions of wombs; and on how embodied beings become linked with pain as a result of pursuing what is against the Law and with imperishable happiness as a result of pursuing the Law as one’s goal.

This passage, too, does not explicitly attribute the present state of human beings to their past deeds. Indeed, its beginning presents the usual threats of hell and the abode of Yama, and its end the usual promise of imperishable happiness. However, the tens of billions of wombs in between do suggest that at least some of these will be human wombs, perhaps even Brahmanical wombs. The theme is not elaborated, and as a matter of fact not even explicitly introduced, but it seems to be present, if only below the surface.

It would not be justified to draw far-reaching conclusions from this passage. The part of it which suggests that human conditions are determined by acts carried out in earlier lives are so close to some fundamental Buddhist notions that they can be looked upon as a slightly adapted, and versified, version of them. Being separated from those one loves, being united with those one hates, old age and disease, are standard elements in the explanation of the first Noble Truth of Buddhism, the Noble Truth of suffering.

“Tens of billions of wombs” were remembered by the Buddha at the moment of his enlightenment, and with it the truth of the unending continuation of suffering which also this passage emphasizes. All this entitles us to see in this passage (or in the relevant parts of it), a reflection of most probably Buddhist ideas, which Manu somehow incorporated in his text. We should not conclude from this that Manu agreed with all its implications, such as the fact that the present state of human beings is determined by their past deeds. It seems more likely that Manu included these elements to show that the meditative way

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1070 Manu 10.42: tapobijaprabhāvaiś ca te gacchanti yuge yuge/ utkarṣaṁ cāpakarṣaṁ ca manuṣyasyeṣv iha janmataḥ/.
1071 Manu 6.61-64: avekṣeta gatān ēnāṁ karmadoṣasamudbhavāḥ/ niraye caiva patanaṁ yātanaś ca yamakavyā// viprayogam priyaiś caiva samprayogam tathāpriyaiḥ/ jarayā cābhībhavanam vyādhibhiś copapiṇḍanam// dehād utkramanaṁ cāsmāt punar garbe ca saṁbhavanam/ yonikōṭisahasresu sṛtiś cāsyāntarātmanaḥ// adharmaprabhavanam caiva duḥkhayogam śaṅrīṁam/ dharmārthaprabhavanam caiva sukhasamyogam aṅkṣayam//
which he prescribed for the Brahmanical wanderer was in no way inferior to the way of
the Buddhists, and was not less concerned with the issue of ending suffering in all its
forms. He did not do so because he had supposedly changed his mind about the ultimate
justification of the superiority of the Brahmins.

Appendix IV: Passages dealing with five-nailed animals

Passages dealing with five-nailed animals and referred to in Lüders 1907 and/or the note
in the critical edition of Mahābhārata 12.139.66.

1. Āpastamba Dharmasūtra 1.5.17.37:
pañcanakhānāṃ godhā-kacchapa-śvāviṭ-charyaka-khadga-śaśa-pūtikhaśa-
varjām/

2. Baudhāyana Dharmasūtra 1.5.131:
bhaksyāḥ śvāviṭ-godhā-śaśa-śalyaka-kacchapa-khadgāḥ khadgavarjāḥ paṁca
pañcanakhiḥ/

3. Gautama Dharmasūtra 17.25:
pañcanakhiṣa cāśalyaka-śaśa-śvāviṭ-godhā-kacchapa (abhaksyāḥ 32)

4. Mānava Dharmasūstra 5.18:
śvāvidham śalyakaṃ godhāṃ khadga-kūrma-śasāṃs tathā/
bhaksyān pañcanakheṣy āhur anuṣṭrāṃś caikatodatalḥ/

5. Mārkandeya Purāṇa 35.2cd-3ab:
śaśakaḥ kacchapa godhā śvāvīt khadgo 'tha putraka/
bhaksyāḥ hy ete tathā varjyau grāmaśūkarakukkuṭau/

6. Vasiṣṭha Dharmasūtra 14.39-40:
śvāvīc-chalyaka-śaśa-kacchapa-godhāḥ pañcanakhānāṃ bhaksyāḥ/
anuṣṭrāḥ paśūnām anyatodantāś ca/

7. Viṣṇusmrī 51.6:
śaśaka-śalyaka-godhā-sadhā-khadga-kūrma-varjam pañcanakhamāṁsāśane
saptarātram upaviṣet/

8. Yāñavalkyaśmrī 1.176:
bhaksyāḥ pañcanakhiḥ sedhā-godhā-kacchapa-śalyakāḥ/
śaśaś ca matsyeśv api hi simhatuṇḍakaroḥitāḥ/

Appendix V: Liberation, enlightenment and death

Manu 6.44 reads:

kapālam vrksamūlāni kucelam asahāyatā/
samatā caiva sarvasminn etan muktasya lakṣaṇam//

This might be translated:

A bowl, the foot of a tree, a ragged piece of cloth, a solitary life, and equanimity towards all — these are the marks of a liberated person. (emphasis added)

Olivelle (2005: 150) translates it differently:

A bowl, the foot of a tree, a ragged piece of cloth, a solitary life, and equanimity towards all — these are the marks of a renouncer. (emphasis added)

Olivelle tries to justify the translation ‘renouncer’ for Sanskrit mukta in a note (p. 290):

renouncer: although the term mukta means literally ‘a liberated man’, it is used here in the same way as mokṣa (see 1.114 n.) to refer to a wandering ascetic. Bühler’s ‘one who has attained liberation’ and Doniger’s ‘one who is Freed’ are, I think, overly literal. The discussion here is about asceticism and ascetics, not about liberation and liberated individuals.

In the note referred to in this note, Olivelle states (p. 243):

the Sanskrit term mokṣa literally means liberation. Manu, however, attaches a technical meaning to the term, using it as a synonym of renunciation and the fourth order of life dedicated exclusively to the search after personal liberation. The term mokṣa has the same meaning when used in the common compound mokṣadharma, which is a section of the [Mahābhārata] and a distinct topic in medieval legal digests (nibandha). Manu makes a clear distinction between this renunciatory asceticism and the life of the Vedic retiree, which he designates as saṃnyāśa (see 6.86 n.). This term, which is the common word for renunciation in later literature, is never used by Manu with that meaning. Bühler’s ‘(manner of gaining) final emancipation and (of) renouncing the world’, and Doniger’s ‘Freedom, and renunciation’ ignore the technical use of these two terms here and in ch. 6. For a more detailed study, see Olivelle 1981.

The more detailed study referred to is an article that appeared in the Journal of the American Oriental Society in 1981, and which bears the title “Contributions to the semantic history of saṃnyāsa”. True to its title, it says a lot of interesting things about saṃnyāsa and its cognates, but virtually nothing about mokṣa. All it says about this topic is found in the following laconic statement (p. 270): “Manu deals with the fourth āśrama, i.e. renunciation, which he calls mokṣa ..., at 6.33-85.” It follows that the translation ‘renouncer’ for Sanskrit mukta, and similarly the translation ‘renunciation’ for Sanskrit mokṣa, are based on Olivelle’s fiat, not on any arguments that are presented or referred to in his book.

A priori there is reason to feel doubtful about this reinterpretation of words which have a literal meaning that is as clear as water to all users of Sanskrit. As a matter of fact,

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1072 See also Olivelle 2010: 41-442.
a few verses earlier in the same passage Manu uses almost the same word: *vimukta* rather than *mukta*. This earlier verse, 6.40, speaks about the same person and calls him *dehād vimukta*. This time Olivelle translates ‘freed from his body’, and we cannot but agree. The obvious conclusion would be that, if our *mukta* is freed from his body, there is no clear reason not to consider him ‘freed, liberated’ rather than a mere ‘renouncer’.

Olivelle does not draw this conclusion. The whole verse in which *dehād vimukta* occurs (6.40) reads:

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yasmād any api bhūtānāṁ dvijān notpadyate bhayam/
tasya dehād vimuktasya bhayaṁ nāsti kutaś cana//
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Olivelle translates this as follows:

Because that twice born has not been the cause of even the slightest fear to creatures, he has nothing to fear from anyone after he is freed from his body. (emphasis added)

The English after he is freed from his body is somewhat ambiguous, but it seems clear that Olivelle understands the verse to refer to the state after death. In order to arrive at that interpretation, he subtly adjusts the translation to this understanding. A more literal interpretation of the verse would be:

Because that twice born is not the cause of even the slightest fear to creatures, he, being freed from the body, has nothing to fear from anyone.

In this more natural interpretation of the verse, the expression “being freed from the body” would seem to qualify the living ascetic. We will return to this issue below.

Olivelle’s biased interpretation of the passage becomes especially clear in his translation of verse 6.78. This verse reads:

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nadīkūlaṁ yathā vrkṣo vrkṣam vā śakunir yathā/
tathā tyajann imaṁ deham kṛcchrād grāhād vimucyate//
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Olivelle translates:

When a tree falls from a river bank, the bird leaves the tree; when he abandons this body in like manner, he escapes the alligator’s painful grasp.

This translation suggests that liberation “from the alligator’s painful grasp” occurs at death, when the person concerned abandons his body. However, this translation is highly problematic, as Olivelle himself indicates in an accompanying note. The note reads (p. 291):

I think commentators and translators alike have failed to understand this simile, which, I must admit, has been cast in turbid syntax. All take the tree falling from the bank and the bird leaving the tree as two independent similes. That is very unlikely, given that the first foot concludes with *vrkṣa* (‘tree’), and the second foot begins with it, indicating that the latter picks up the theme of the former. Further,
they take grāha (which I think means alligator rather than shark) only with the giving up of the body in the second half of the verse. I think the last foot is connected to both the simile and the ascetic giving up the body. The meaning then seems to be that a bird flying off before the fall of the tree escapes the alligator’s grasp in the river. Likewise, when an ascetic abandons the body before its natural fall at death (which is here compared to the fall of the tree), he escapes the grasp of the alligator, probably Yama (6.61). This fits in nicely with the theme of the preceding verse, namely, that an ascetic must abandon the body voluntarily.

With all respect to Olivelle’s attempts to make sense of this verse, one does have the feeling that his efforts were not necessary, for the syntax of this verse is far from turbid. It is turbid if one wishes to understand it in Olivelle’s manner, but if one does not, it can be translated without difficulty, as follows:

Just as a tree abandons the bank of a river, or a bird abandons a tree, abandoning in the same way this body he is liberated from the alligator’s painful grasp.

Here the person concerned is described as abandoning his body. As a result, we may assume, he is liberated from his body. The precise meaning of abandoning one’s body, and of being liberated from one’s body, is open to debate, but there is no compelling reason to believe that it is to be identified with death. Indeed, ‘abandoning the body’ — the Sanskrit term used is kāyotsarga — is one of the six obligatory duties for members of the Jaina mendicant order while they are alive.\footnote{1073 Jaini 1979: 189 f.}

It appears, then, that several of the problems mentioned by Olivelle turn out, at closer inspection, not to be problems at all. The words mokṣa and mukta are not used in a technical meaning in the Māñava Dharmaśāstra, the syntax of verse 6.78 is not turbid, and verse 6.40 can be interpreted more literally. However, the removal of these problems leads inescapably to the conclusion that Manu refers to living persons as being liberated. The marks of such a living liberated person, moreover, are a bowl, the foot of a tree, a ragged piece of cloth, a solitary life, and equanimity towards all; he is not the cause of even the slightest fear to creatures, and he abandons his body, which probably means that he engages in ascetic practices of a certain sort.

Yet it is understandable why Olivelle went a long way to prove that living liberated persons are not recognized by Manu. The way the presumably liberated person is described in the relevant section of the Māñava Dharmaśāstra (6.33-86), which is the section that deals with the fourth stage of life, is confusing or worse. Rather than describing a person who has reached his goal, it characterizes him as setting his mind on mokṣa (mano mokṣe nīveśayet; Manu 6. 35, 36), as desiring mokṣa (mokṣam icchan; Manu 6. 37). This suggests that the liberated person is not completely liberated after all. The section is furthermore full of rules which the presumably liberated person must follow. Once again, one gains the impression that a state to be attained is talked about, rather than a state that has been attained. And to top it all, the section points out in verse 58 that “even an ascetic who has freed himself is shackled by what is received with a show of reverence” (cd: abhipijitālābhais tu yatir mukto ‘pi badhyate; tr. Olivelle). In other words, the liberation Manu talks about is relative, even confused. He calls ‘liberated’ a person who strives for liberation, treats the liberated person as someone who
must be told what to do, and specifies that being liberated is no guarantee against being shackled.1074

This, I think, is the conclusion we have to draw from Manu’s references to liberation: Manu has a rather hazy, perhaps self-contradictory, notion of what liberation is. We can try to bring consistency into his statements by deciding that certain words are not used in their ordinary meanings, that certain verses must be interpreted in artificial ways. This will only hide from us that Manu’s verses do not present a clear and coherent notion of what liberation is.

Perhaps this should not surprise us. Manu himself does not believe in liberation. For him the state of householder (grhaṣṭha) is the best from among the four stages of life (6.89). He pronounces in favour of something he calls vedasamnyāsa which leads to the paramā gati (6.88, 93), the highest state, but there is no hint that this highest state is liberation. To this must be added that it is rather tricky for a lawgiver to accept the existence of living and yet irreversibly liberated people. Such people would obviously fall in a category totally different from everyone else. They would not be obliged to follow rules, and law books would have no advice to give them. It would have been more convenient for Manu if Olivelle had been right, if one could say that every liberated person is a dead person. Manu does not say so, as we have seen. He acknowledges the existence of living liberated people, but in a way takes their liberation away from them by subordinating them to his rules, and by pointing out that their state is not irreversible. This suggests that the belief in the existence of liberated people in Manu’s time was wide-spread, too wide-spread to be simply ignored.

This interpretation of the way the Māṇava Dharmaśāstra envisages liberation is confirmed when we look at the Bhagavadgītā. Here we can follow the lead of Peter Schreiner, who brought out a study and translation of this text in 1991. In the introduction he states (p. 30):

Die Bhagavad-Gītā stellt sich … als ein Text dar, der den Übergang vom Ideal des videhamukta (‘Entkörpert-Erlösten’) zum Ideal des ‘Lebend-Erlösten’ (jīvanmukta) markiert.

Schreiner argues that the Yoga that the Bhagavadgītā modifies and replaces strove for liberation at the moment of death. He cites in this context one verse in particular, which refers to a specific Yogic state and then continues (Bhag 2.72cd):

He who abides therein also at the moment of death, he reaches the brahmanirvāṇa (sthītvāsyāṁ antakāle ‘pi brahmanirvāṇam rcchati)

According to Schreiner, this notion of liberation at death changes in the Bhagavadgītā: “der Erlössungsbegriff [konnte] umgedeutet werden zu einer rein geistigen, rein psychischen Angelegenheit, zu einer Haltung, die man auch im Leben und in der Welt verwirklichen konnte” (p. 30).

If I understand this passage correctly, Schreiner claims that the Bhagavadgītā accepts, at least in some of its passages, the ideal of the jīvanmukta, the person liberated while alive. He does not say that this term is actually used in the Bhagavadgītā, and

1074 This manner of speaking also occurs elsewhere in the text, in connection with death, for example; so Manu 7.143d: mṛtāḥ sa na sa jīvati.
indeed it is not. But if he is right, we would expect that the Bhagavadgītā uses the expression ‘liberated’ or some similar term in connection with people who are still alive. Unfortunately Schreiner gives no references to passages that do so; to my knowledge no unambiguous passages to that effect exist. Schreiner does speak about bhakti ‘teilhabende Hingabe an eine Gottheit’ and the role that Kṛṣṇa plays in it, and then states (p. 33):

Die Teilhabe an Kṛṣṇa ahmt also einen Yoga-Weg nach, welcher vermutlich nicht mehr ausschliesslich als ein Weg volliger und endgültiger Entsagung (mit dem Ziel erlösenden Sterbens) angesehen wurde; mit dem Ideal der Bhakti setzt sich die Vorstellung der Erlösung bei Lebzeiten endgültig durch. Thesenhaft vereinfacht: Verkörpert der yukta (‘Geeinte’) das Ideal jener Erlösungslehren, denen Erlösung nur nach dem Sterben denkbar war, so belegt der bhakta (‘der hingeugungsvoll Teilhabende’) den vollzogenen Übergang zur Lehre von der Erlösung bei Lebzeiten.

I am not sure why this passage should be applicable to the Bhagavadgītā. Recall, to begin with, Bhagavadgītā 2.72, which we considered above, and which stated that he who abides in a specific Yogic state also at the moment of death reaches the brahmanirvāna. Schreiner cited this verse as being an illustration of the Yogic belief in liberation at death. However, the fulfilment of bhakti comes at death, too, judging by Bhagavadgītā 8.5:

He who dies remembering only me at the moment of death, when abandoning his body, he will go to my state of being; there is no doubt about this.

antākāle ca mām eva smaran mukvā kalevaram/
yāḥ prayāti sa madbhāvam yātī nāṣṭy atra saṃśayāḥ/

Moreover, I have the impression that the Bhagavadgītā speaks about liberation and the liberated person in the same vague and somewhat inconsistent manner as the Mānava Dharmaśāstra. Consider Bhagavadgītā 5.28:

The sage who controls his senses, mind and intellect, who is intent on liberation, who has no desire, fear or wrath, he is really eternally liberated.

yatendriyam unobuddhir munir mokṣaparāyanah/
vigatecchabhayakrodho yaḥ sadā mukta eva saḥ/

Here the person who is ‘intent on liberation’ (mokṣaparāyanah) is, in the very same breath, characterized as being ‘eternally liberated’ (sadā mukta eva). The similarity with Manu’s characterization of the liberated person as ‘setting his mind on liberation’ and as ‘desiring liberation’ is striking.

The general presupposition in the Bhagavadgītā, however, would seem to be that liberation takes place at death. Consider Bhagavadgītā 5.23:

He who can in this world, before he leaves his body, bear the impulse that arises from desire and wrath, he is controlled (yukta), he is a happy man.

śāknotihaiva yah sōdhum prāk śaṅrabimokṣānāṁ/
kāmakrodhodbhavaṁ vegāṁ sa yuktāḥ sa sukhī narāḥ//
Nothing would have been easier here than to read *muktaḥ* (‘liberated’) for *yuktah* (‘controlled’). But this is not even recorded as a variant reading in the critical edition of the text. This suggests that life before death is not the time during which one can be liberated.1075

There are many more passages that could be considered. I will not do so here. Let me simply state that I have found no indications in the *Bhagavadgītā* that compel us to believe that this text accepts the notion of liberation while alive. A number of passages suggest the opposite. Others betray a rather imprecise use of the words *mukta* and *mokṣa*.

The two texts which we have considered so far — the *Māṇava Dharmaśāstra* and the *Bhagavadgītā* — suggest that there was some imprecision in the use of the terms ‘liberation’ and ‘liberated’, at least in Brahmanical circles, around the time when these texts were composed. This should not really surprise us. The Sanskrit verb *muc-* and its derivatives are very common and can be used in contexts that have nothing to do with high spiritual goals. One can be liberated from many things. The question ‘liberated from what?’ was therefore as essential to the early Indians as it is for modern research. We are primarily interested in liberation from *samsāra*, from the cycle of renewed births. It is therefore legitimate to ask how one could possibly be alive and liberated from the cycle of rebirths. A living being is by definition in his cycle of rebirths. For some this may be their last birth, but this does not change the fact that it is one in their series of births and rebirths. Understood in this way, *liberation while alive* is a contradiction in terms.

This observation has to be qualified. It is conceivable that certain people are alive, but have undergone inner transformations that guarantee that they will never be born again. They are like the prisoner who knows that he will be freed soon. They are not liberated in the strict sense, but they are *as good as liberated*. If the transformations they have undergone are moreover irreversible, if nothing whatsoever could ever undo them, then the expression ‘liberated while alive’ becomes understandable, though strictly speaking still metaphorical.1076

However, the term ‘liberated’ can also be used with regard to features that bind a person to this world. This person can then be liberated from these features, and therefore presumably certain of liberation from this world after death, while yet living in this world. With this in mind I propose to consider a third passage, a conversation recorded in the *Mahābhārata* (12.308); it has recently been studied by James Fitzgerald (2003a). This conversation calls itself, in Fitzgerald’s translation, “a conversation between a man who had gained Absolute Freedom in the midst of the royal parasol and such things and the woman who had gained Absolute Freedom with the triple staff of renunciation”.1077 In other words, it opposes two persons who are both convinced that they are, at the moment they confront each other, liberated.

1075 Nelson (1996: 21) interprets *Bhagavadvītā* 5.23 and 5.28 together: “*Bhagavad Gītā* 5.28 tells us that the ascetic who has controlled his senses and attained identity with Brahman is eternally liberated (sādā mukta eva). This is possible, we read at 5.23, ‘prior to release from the body (prāk śarīra-vimoksanā).’” This interpretation leaves out of consideration inconvenient elements.

1076 I cannot deal with the (primarily Advaita) notion according to which liberation is really beginningless and only need to be realized. It is however to be noted that the expressions *jīvanmukta* and *jīvanmukti* flourished primarily, if not exclusively, in such intellectual surroundings.

1077 *Mbh* 12.308.19: *samvādaḥ … chattrādiṣu vimuktasya muktāyāś ca tridāndake.*
The two participants in this conversation are King Janaka of Mithilā and a nun called Sulabhā. Both of them have serious doubts about the liberated state of the other. It is not our task to decide who of the two is ‘really’ liberated; the epic appears to opt for Sulabhā. We are rather more interested in the notion of liberation that the two accept. It turns out that the disagreement between the two does not concern the question what liberation is. They agree on the features from which a liberated person is believed to be freed.

There is a lot of talk about freedom and freed persons in this conversation, and it is not always clear what the protagonists are supposed to be free from. However, some passages are explicit in this regard. King Janaka describes himself as ‘freed from passion’ (muktarāga [28]), ‘freed from attachments’ (muktasaṅgin [31], muktasaṅga [37], saṅgāṭ] … mucyate [44]). He is apparently also free from the pairs of opposites, about which it is stated: “That transcends all the different stages and is Perfection.”

Information about liberation can also be extracted from Sulabhā’s criticism of the king:

Why, King of Mithilā, does someone who is Freed from the pairs of opposites (such as, “This is mine and this is not mine”) ask “Who are you, whose are you, and where do you come from?” O lord of the earth, what indication is there that one is Freed when he treats some as an enemy, others as allies, and others as neutrals in victory, in alliances, and in war? … What indication is there that one is Freed when he does not see the sameness in kindness and unkindness, in weakness and in strength? So you are not Freed, and the conceit you may have in believing you have Absolute Freedom should be suppressed by your friends, as medicines might be used for someone who is unconscious. O suppressor of your enemies, if one looks at these points of attachment here and those there and sees them within himself, what indication is there then that he is Freed?

The liberated person is here, once again, characterized as being free from the pairs of opposites, and free from attachments, as seeing the sameness in kindness and unkindness, in weakness and in strength (more literally perhaps: as having the same eye with regard to kindness and unkindness, with regard to weakness and strength). Sulabhā further points out that a king is always dependent upon others, suggesting that the liberated person is independent. Since the liberated person is the opposite of those who are bound by attachment and aversion (abhiṣaṅgāvarodadhāhyāṃ baddhāḥ [166]), he is not so bound. Among the further characteristics that we can cull from Sulabhā’s words, we find that liberated persons have no attachment to their own body (svadehe nābhisāṅgaḥ [37], 162), that they are, once again, free from attachment (muktasaṅga [164]), and that they have overcome the bonds that fettered them (pāśān ākramya [164]).

It seems, then, that King Janaka and the nun Sulabhā agree on the main characteristics of a liberated person. Such a person is primarily and essentially liberated

1078 Mbh 12.308.30cd: mahad dvamdvapramoksāya sā siddhir yā vayotigā.
1079 Mbh 12.308.127b-132: idāṃ me syād idāṃ neti dvamdvair muktasya maithila/ kāsi kasya kuto veti vacane kim prayaṇam/ ripau mitre 'tha madhyasthe vijaye samdhivigrahē/ krtavāṅ yo mahīpāla kim tasmin muktalakṣanam/ …/ priye daiyāpriye caiva durbale balavaty apiḥ yasya nāsti samaṃ caṅkṣāh kim tasmin muktalakṣanam/ tat amuktasya te mokṣe yo 'bhimāṇo bhaven nṛpa/ suhṛdbhīḥ sa nivāyas te vicittasyeva bhesajāḥ/ tāni tāṇy anusamṛḍyā saṅgasthānāṇy arindama/ ātmanātmaṇi sampāṣyet kim tasmin muktalakṣanam/
from attachment, from the pairs of opposites, from aversion. The cycle of rebirths does not, or hardly, enter into the picture.

Toward the end of her discourse, Sulabhā makes a remark that may be revealing. She says: “Someone who is already Freed does not become Free; someone who is already at peace does not become peaceful.” This remark, I propose, is directed against the attitude that finds expression in Manu’s observation to the extent that the liberated person sets his mind on liberation or desires liberation, and in the statement of the Bhagavadgītā according to which the liberated person is intent on liberation. It appears to be directed against all those who confuse striving for liberation with being liberated. Sulabhā considers herself as being liberated and not as striving for liberation. She obviously considers herself liberated while alive. When she has to specify what she is liberated from, she stipulates that she is liberated from attachments and the like, not from the cycle of rebirths.

All the three texts we have considered so far are Brahmanical texts. I have argued elsewhere that Brahmanism borrowed the notion of liberation from religious currents that originated outside the realm where it held sway. It adopted this notion with all that came with it, adapting it to its own needs and requirements. Since some of the currents that were originally independent of Brahmanism have survived, it will be interesting to see what position they, or at least one of them, take with regard to liberation and death.

One of these currents is Jainism. Its founder — or more correctly, its most recent ‘fordmaker’ (tīrthāṅkara) — was sure that he would never be born again. He was, in that sense, sure of his forthcoming liberation. But was he liberated at the time of his last earthly existence, say from the time of his enlightenment onward?

The answer provided by the Jaina tradition is a clear no. This is how Paul Dundas explains the difference between liberation and enlightenment (2002: 104):

Spiritual deliverance (mokṣa) is defined in simple terms by Umāsvāti ([Tattvārtha Śūtra] 10.5) as release from all karma. This should in its finality be clearly distinguished from the attainment of enlightenment which, after the cultivation of morally positive attitudes, the practice of austerity and the gradual suppression of negative discriminative mental processes, involves the uprooting of deluding karma which is then succeeded by the removal of the remaining three harming karmas, thus liberating the innate qualities, such as omniscience, of the jīva. Enlightenment, however, does not of itself entail death, for the operation of the four non-harming karmas is still unimpaired, with life and name karma guaranteeing the continuation of embodied existence and experience karma ensuring bodily sensations, although the latter point was a source of sectarian dispute for the Digambaras who denied that a kevalin's feeling karma could bring about an effect such as hunger. The enlightened person, whether fordmaker or

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1080 Mbh 12.308.32 states that “people’s deeds produce their coming to be again” (janayati … karma nṛṇāṁ … punarbhavam), which may hint at the effect of liberation on rebirth.

1081 Mbh 12.308.188: mukto na mucyate yaś ca śānto yaś ca na śāmyati.

1082 Greater Magadha. In spite of claims to the contrary, the idea of liberation took time to settle in Brahmanism: “References to derivatives of the verb muc are surprisingly rare in the early Upanisads. They appear mostly in the Brhadāranyaka and Katha, and many of the usages that exist do not suggest Advaitic liberation.” (Fort 1998: 30). See further § III.1.

1083 This is 10.3 in Tatia’s translation (1994).
kevalin, may therefore spend a considerable period after enlightenment engaging in mental and physical activities such as walking, preaching and meditation. However, no new karma is bound by these activities nor is it possible in this state to carry out acts of violence, even involuntarily.

It is clear from this passage that the enlightened Jaina sage, the kevalin, is alive but not liberated. The liberated Jaina sage is called siddha, but he is not embodied and is therefore dead from a physiological point of view: the siddha resides in the realm of the siddhas “at the top of the universe where it will exist perpetually without any further rebirth in a disembodied and genderless state of perfect joy, energy, consciousness and knowledge” (p. 105).

The Jaina tradition, as can be seen from the above, accepts the existence of two different but clearly defined and irreversible transitions: the moment of enlightenment and the moment of liberation. The second of these two coincides with physical death. If one is to follow this scheme, strictly speaking the only way to call people liberated even though they, or rather their bodies, are still alive, is by downplaying the importance of the second transition, death. This is what Advaita Vedānta in particular appears to have done. Śāṅkara on Brhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad 4.4.6, for example, states: “For the knower who dies there is no change of condition — no state different from that experienced while living.”

I will not say more about Advaita, whose ideas about jīvanmukti have been studied by others, but will very briefly touch upon the question how early Buddhism considered these two transitions: enlightenment and death.

This is not the occasion for an in-depth study of the notion of ‘liberation’ in Buddhism, so that some impressions must suffice. The term ‘liberated’ (vimutta) is often used in the Pāli canon, very often in connection with the mind (citta, cetas). It is most typically used with reference to people who are still alive, perhaps never with reference to people who have died. But the freedom referred to does not normally seem to concern rebirth, but rather the taints (āsava): The Buddha and the Arhats have been able to free themselves from those taints. This would allow us to say that the Buddha and the Arhats were liberated in life, but only if we specify what they were liberated from: the taints, or perhaps something else.

However, no hasty conclusions should be drawn here. The precise significance of the first transition, the one associated with enlightenment, was not altogether clear to the early Buddhists, because a debate took place with regard to whether the state of Arhat was really irreversible, or whether an Arhat could still fall back into the ordinary state of being. With this vital issue pending, it is not obvious that an Arhat is really and fully liberated from the cycle of rebirths. Some schools also maintained that the two transitions — enlightenment and death — coincided in the case of certain Arhats, the so-called ‘level-headed’ (samaśīrṣin) Arhats.

The precise significance of the second transition, the one at death, is not easy to determine either. The Buddha is believed to have refused to answer the question whether

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1086 Note that “[i]n many … places in the Suttapitaka the verb vi + muc is attested as a textual variant for adhi + muc, and vice versa. In the places where the verbs are alternatives, they refer to a state of concentration rather than liberation.” (Wynne 2007: 79)
1087 Bareau 1957: 244 f.
1088 Bareau 1957: 248 f.
a Buddha (tathāgata) exists after death. This is the last of the four so-called ‘unexplained’ (Pāli avyākata, Sanskrit avyākṛta) questions, to which the Buddha always reacts by remaining silent.\textsuperscript{1089} It is safe to claim that the Buddha, or any Arhat for that matter, was not believed to be reborn after the life in which he attained Arhatship, but this is a negative observation. The early Buddhist texts add no positive information.

It is common in scholarly literature to distinguish between nirvāṇa and parinirvāṇa. The Buddha is supposed to have reached the former while in his thirties, the second at death in his early eighties. Indeed, parinirvāṇa is often used to refer to the death of the Buddha. This does not, however, appear to be justified. The term parinirvāṇa is used, in early Buddhist literature and in certain Mahāyāna Sūtras, almost as a synonym of nirvāṇa.\textsuperscript{1090} More precisely perhaps, as Thomas pointed out (1947: 295), “Nirvāṇa expresses the state, parinirvāṇa the attaining of the state, or in Pāli, he parinibbāyati, attains the state, and then nibbāyati, he is in the state expressed by nibbāna.”

By way of conclusion we may observe that it is important to know, when the early texts speak of liberation, what the person concerned is supposed to be liberated from. If it is from the cycle of rebirths, liberation is likely to coincide with death, for the simple reason that the person remains part of this cycle until then. Jainaism takes this position, in spite of the fact that its sages may have entered long before their death stages from which there is no return and from which liberation is guaranteed.

Liberation can also be thought of as freedom from something else, say attachment. In such cases liberation in life becomes conceivable. It goes without saying that being liberated while alive, among those who believe in it, is an enviable qualification, which almost predictably led to competition between claimants and their followers. King Janaka and the nun Sulabhā illustrate this. Lawgivers, on the other hand, felt no doubt hesitant to admit the existence of people who do not fit into any legal category, and who are not bound by any rules. The early Buddhists had second thoughts about assigning the irrevocable title of Arhat to people still alive, and therefore considered the possibility that Arhats, too, might fall back. We have seen that the Mānava Dharmaśāstra and the Bhagavadgītā, though not denying the possibility of liberation in life, reduce it in practice to the solemn pursuit of a high but distant aim.

\textbf{Appendix VI: The Rgveda Prātiśākhya and its Śākha}

The \textit{Rgveda Prātiśākhya} gives a detailed description of the phonetic aspects of the \textit{Rgveda} and its Pada- and Kramapātha. The agreement with the \textit{Rgveda} known to us\textsuperscript{1091} is almost complete, so much so that Max Müller (1891: li) could say, on the basis of this Prātiśākhya, that "previously ... to the time when the Prātiśākhya was composed, both the Pada and the Śamhitā texts were so firmly settled that it was impossible, for the sake of uniformity or regularity, to omit one single short a ...". Surya Kanta (1933: 78-96) made a detailed comparison of the lengthening of final vowels in the \textit{Rgveda} and its description

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{1089} E.g. SN II p. 222 f. Cf. Oetke 1994: 88 f.
\item \textsuperscript{1090} Thomas 1947; Nattier 2003: 148-49 n. 26.
\item \textsuperscript{1091} Not to prejudge the issue, I shall speak of the ‘\textit{Rgveda} known to us’, ‘our \textit{Rgveda}’ etc., instead of using the term ‘Śākala Śamhitā’ or some of its equivalents. See below.
\end{itemize}
\end{footnotesize}
in the *Rgveda Prātiśākhya*, and found the latter to be "entirely free from all oversights" (p. 78).

There are, none the less, some points where the *Rgveda Prātiśākhya* does not agree with our *Rgveda*. Some of these have given rise to expressions of doubt if the *Rgveda Prātiśākhya* was meant for the version of the *Rgveda* that we are acquainted with, first by Rudolph Roth (1852: XLV), later by Hannes Sköld (1926: 42-46). Also Müller (1860: 135-136) said that it is "doubtful how far the rules [of the Prātiśākhya] can be considered as representing the general opinion of the Śākalas." (The Śākalas constitute the Śākhā to which our *Rgveda* is said to belong [Renou 1947: 24 n; Bhandarkar 1893: 419; see below.] Yet Müller (1860: 135, 137) thought that the *Rgveda Prātiśākhya* is intimately connected with our *Rgveda* and did not hesitate to call it "Śākala-prātiśākhya". We will see below that he was mistaken.

On a number of occasions the *Rgveda Prātiśākhya* presents a point of view that does not agree with our *Rgveda*. In some cases it contrasts this with a view that is in complete agreement with the text known to us, but which it attributes to others.

RPr I.43 (44) says that ś, ṭ, ṭh, ḍ, ḍh, ṇ are retroflex (mūrdhanya). RPr I.51 (52) tells us that Vedicamitra holds a partially different opinion: the places of articulation of ḍ are the root of the tongue (jīhvāṅāla) and the palate (tāḷa). The very next sūtra then adds that his (i.e. Vedicamitra's) ḍ becomes ḷ when standing between two vowels, and his aspirated ḍh becomes ḍḷ; examples are īḷā, sāḥā, as well as viḍvāṅga when with an Avagraha (i.e., in the Padapātha: viḷḍvāṅga). This change of ḍ to ḷ and ḍh to ḍḷ characterizes our *Rgveda*, but is, apparently, not accepted by the author of the *Rgveda Prātiśākhya*.

RPr VI.1-13 (378-389) gives a detailed description of the circumstances in which doubling of consonants takes place. The Prātiśākhya then proceeds (sūtra VI.14 [390]):

\[ \text{samyuktaṁ tu vyañjananāṁ śākalena.} \]

The commentator Uvāta (p. 200) gives two explanations of this sūtra. In the first one, a consonant which is connected with another one, which comes after a long vowel and is at the beginning of a word, is not doubled according to the precept of the Śākalas (samyuktaṁ vyañjananāṁ dirghāḥ param na krāmati śākalena vidhānena/... padādir ity evaṁvartate/). According to the second explanation of this sūtra, a consonant that is connected with another one is never doubled according to the precept of the Śākalas (apare dirghagrahānam padādirgraḥanāṁ ca nānuvartayanti/ aviśeṣena sarvatra śākalam icchanti/). The second interpretation seems to be the better one; it coincides with what we find in Pāṇini's *Aṣṭādhhyāyī*. P. 8.4.51 reads: sarvatra śākalyasya [yaro (45), dve (46), na (48)] "In all [the contexts described in the preceding rules there is] no [substitution of] two [consonants] in the place of a consonant different from h, according to Śākalya." The opinion here ascribed to the Śākalas is in agreement with our *Rgveda*, which does not contain doubled consonants in such contexts (Müller 1869: CXIII). This opinion is again not shared by the author of the Prātiśākhya, who even considers absence of doubling a fault (RPr XIV.58 [816]).

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1092 RPr I.52 (53): dvayoś cāsyā svarayor madhyam etya sampadyate sa ḍakāro ṭākārāh/ ḍhakāratām eti sa eva cāsyā ḍhakārah saṇnǔśmanā samprayuktōḥ/ īḷā sāḥā cātra nīdarśanāṁ viḍvāṅga ity etad avagraheṇa/.

1093 The word śākala could here be translated either ‘of Śākalya’ or ‘of the Śākalas’. I choose for the second translation since Śākalya’s opinion — as against the one of the Śākalas (see below) — is not always in agreement with our *Rgveda*. See Müller 1869: 9 and below. It is true that on this particular point the Śākalas seem to be of one mind with Śākalya, as may follow from P. 8.4.51, to be mentioned presently.
RPr XI.17-19 (629-631) gives three opinions regarding the correct form of the Kramapātha on RV 8.70.9: \textit{ud ā ṭu no vaso} (see Müller 1869: CCXXVIII; Uvāta, pp. 334-335). Sūtra XI.17 (629; \textit{anantāre trikrama-kāraṇe yadi tribhīṣ ca gārgyāh punar eva ca tribhiṣh}) gives the opinion of Gārgya; according to him the correct form is: \textit{ud ā ṭu/ ā ṭu ṭu naḥ}. Sūtra XI. 18 (630; \textit{trīsaṃgame pañcābhira āryyayanugrahaḥ}) mentions no name and favours acceptance of the whole row of five words \textit{ud ā ṭu no vaso} into the Kramapātha. Sūtra XI.19 (631; \textit{cauḥkramas tu ʾacārito ʾtra sākalaḥ}), finally, describes the practice of the Śākalas; they take four words into the Kramapātha: \textit{ud ā ṭu naḥ}. One gets the impression that sūtra XI.18 (630) expresses the view of the author of the Prātiśākhya, not of some teachers (\textit{eka ācāryāḥ}) as Uvāta (p. 334) has it. But this view is not in agreement with the present-day practice of the Vaidikas. Present-day practice is the same as what sūtra XI.19 (631) describes as the practice of the Śākalas: four words are taken into the Kramapātha. This I could ascertain by consulting Pandit Kinjawadekar Shastri in Poona, who had the \textit{Ṛgveda} and its Pada- and Kramapātha committed to memory.

[The \textit{Ṛgveda} Prātiśākhya gives another detail regarding how the Śākalas recite the Kramapātha in sūtra XI.61 (673). The Śākalas, we here learn, never recite a word in their Kramapātha \textit{upasthita} (i.e., merely followed by \textit{i}i); instead they recite such a word \textit{sthitopasthita} (followed by \textit{i}i, after which the word itself is repeated), since only thus the word is seen as it is (\textit{sthitisthitopasthitayo ca drśyate padaṁ yathāvad vyayavad dhī upasthitet/kvacit sthitau caivam ato ʾdiḥ sākalaḥ krame sthitopasthitam ācāranty uta/}). Uvāta (p. 360) gives as illustrations: \textit{āraig ity āraik} (to RV 1.113.16), \textit{sv iti su} (to RV 1.173.12), \textit{prātar iti prāth}. This also is in agreement with present-day practice, as I again learned from Pandit Kinjawadekar Shastri. This time, however, the practice of the Śākalas is not explicitly contrasted with the practice of others.]

According to RPr I.64 (65) the Śākalas show nasalization in the vowel of three mātrās that occurs in a pause, in order not to neglect the instruction of the teachers (\textit{tat trimātre sākalā darśayanty ācāryasyāstṛaparilopahetavah}). This concerns the last word of RV 10.146.1, which the Śākalas read \textit{vindatiḥ} as does our \textit{Ṛgveda}. The last part of the sūtra is not fully clear (cf. Müller 1869: XXIII), but seems to contrast this sūtra with the preceding one. According to the preceding sūtra, the teachers say that the first eight vowels (i.e., a r i u e o a i au) are nasalized when they occur in a pause and are not pragṛhya (RPr I.63 [64]: \textit{aśāv ādyān avasāne ʾpragṛhyān ācāryā āhur annaśiśikān svārān}). If the opinion of the teachers coincides with the opinion of the author of the \textit{Ṛgveda Prātiśākhya} — which is likely (cf. Shastri 1937: 154), but not fully certain — this is the fourth instance where the version of the \textit{Ṛgveda} which agrees with the \textit{Ṛgveda Prātiśākhya} differs from the version known to us.

RPr IV.17 (236) gives the opinion of ‘some’ (\textit{eke}, RPr IV.16 [235]). According to them, when \textit{t} or \textit{n} is followed by \textit{s}, \textit{t} comes in between (\textit{takāraṇakāraṇos tu āhuh sakārodayar yakāram}). This rule is followed in our \textit{Ṛgveda}, as far as the sound \textit{n} is concerned. Examples are: RV 2.1.15 \textit{tān-t-sam}; 3.1.4 \textit{avardhayant-t-subhagam}; 3.2.10 \textit{akṛṇya-t-svadhitum}. The version underlying the \textit{Ṛgveda Prātiśākhya} did not, to all appearances, insert \textit{t} in these cases.

Some more deviations of the \textit{Ṛgveda Prātiśākhya} from our \textit{Ṛgveda} may be mentioned. RPr IV.36 (255) prescribes elision of \textit{visarjanīya} before a fricative which is itself followed by a voiceless consonant, also when the fricative is made retroflex (\textit{ūśm any aghosodaye luptaye pare nate ‘pi}). This rule is normally not obeyed in our \textit{Ṛgveda}. For example, RV 6.69.6 reads \textit{samudra sthāḥ} where we would expect \textit{samudra
sthah on the basis of this sūtra. Similarly, RV 5.59.1 reads vah spal instead of va spal, RV 6.47.30 nih śṭanihi instead of ni śṭanihi. The Rgveda Prātiśākhya does not give the opinion of others this time.

RP Pr IV.6 (225) tells us that according to all teachers the sound m, when followed by an explosive which has a different place of articulation, changes into the nasal which has the same place of articulation as that following consonant (vīsthāne sparsā udaye makāraḥ sarveṣām evodayasyottamam svam). This rule is not followed in our Rgveda, witness RV 10.135.3 yaṃ kumāra, not yaṃ kumāra; 8.62.11 ahaṃ ca, not ahaṃ ca; 3.48.2 tam te, not tan te. Again no contrasting opinions are given.

RP Pr IV.7 (226) says that m before y, l, v which occur in the beginning of a word, becomes itself nasalized ẏ, l, ẏ respectively (antasthāsaḥ repharavāṃ parāsū tāṃ tāṃ padādiṣv anunāṣikāṃ tu). Our Rgveda does not obey this rule: RV 2.25.1 reads yaṃ yaṃ yujam instead of yaṅ yaṅ yujam; 10.71.2 bhadraśāṃ lakṣmīr instead of bhadraśāl lakṣmīr; 6.48.14 tam va instead of tav va.

According to RP Pr IV.8 (227), n becomes nasal ṭ, when followed by l. Our Rgveda does not oblige, vide RV 2.12.4 jīgīvāṃ lakṣam (Pp. jīgīvān) instead of jīgīvāl lakṣam.

On a number of occasions the Rgveda Prātiśākhya talks about verses which do not occur in our Rgveda:

RP Pr XVIII.56 (1057) reads: caturbhīs tu paraṃ dvābhīyām tava svādiṣṭhā tacchamyoḥ "But the verses tava svādiṣṭhā ... and tacchamyoh ... are with four, then with two [versefeet]." The first of these two verses is RV 4.10.5. The second does not occur in our Rgveda. It occurs in the Rgveda Khila (5.1.5 and 5.3.7) and reads there: tac chamyoyār ā vṛṇīmahe gātum yajñāya gātum yajñāpataye daivī svastir astu nas svastir mānusebhīyah/ ārīdhvam jīgīh bāṣeṣām śan no astu dvipade śaṅ ca tatuspadă//. (It is not clear how this verse is to be divided into six versefeet [cf. Müller 1869: CCCLIII].) We learn from the commentator Nārāyaṇa on Āśvalāyana Gṛhyasūtra 3.5.9 that it is the final verse of the Bāskala Samhitā (Scheffelwitz 1906: 132; Müller 1869: CCCLIII).

RP Pr XVII.45 (996) reads: ekādāśaivā chaṇḍasi pādā ye śoṣākṣaṛāh/ sarve trikadrukīyāsū naṅo ke 'stādāṣaṅkṣaraḥ// "There are eleven versefeet in the Śāṅhitā which have sixteen syllables; they are all in the verses of the Trikadruka. There is a versefoot of eighteen syllables in the hymn of Nakula." Our Rgveda contains no hymn that is ascribed to Nakula. Uvaṭa (p. 485) quotes in this connection the following line: arcāṃ satyasamaṃ ratnadāṃ abhi priyaṃ matim kavim. This occurs in the Rgveda Khila (3.22.4a).

RP Pr XVI.88-92 (947-951) deals with the Subhēṣaja hymn, which does not occur in our Rgveda. The reading of sūtra XVI.92 (951) has been corrected by Scheffelwitz (1906: 125) and shown to be about Rgveda Khila 4.9.

RP Pr II.46 (150) refers to the verse tena no 'dya ... This is Rgveda Khila 5.1.3b, which reads: tena nodya viṣe devās sam priyāṃ sam avānan.

The Rgveda Prātiśākhya refers five times to verses which occur neither in our Rgveda nor in the Khilas known to us, viz., in sūtras XVI.19 (878), XVI.17 (876), V.24 (341), VII.33 (465), IX.11 (548); see Scheffelwitz 1906: 18-19. Two of these five

1094 The rule of the Prātiśākhya is at least once obeyed in our Rgveda. RV 1.182.7 reads niṣṭhito for Pp. nih'sṭhitah. More interesting is that the text of the Rgveda Prātiśākhya itself follows the rule (Shastri 1959: 63).

1095 Müller's edition reads antahsthaśu. But see above.

1096 This translation of chaṇḍasi follows Uvaṭa (p. 484).
references can be traced in the Brāhmaṇas and Śrautasūtras of the Rgveda. RPr XVI.19 (878) uses the word indra to refer to a three-verse (trc) which, according to Uvāta (p. 445), begins thus: indra juṣhasva pravahā yāh śāra harīha/ pibā sutasya matir na madhvaś ca kānaś cārur madāyai/. This section occurs at Aitareya Brāhmaṇa 4.1.2, Kauśitaki Brāhmaṇa 17.1, Āśvalāyana Śrautasūtra 6.3.1, and Śāṅkhyaśāstra Śrāutasūtra 9.5.3. RPr V.24 (341) seems to refer to the line te devāḥ parisṛteṣv evu lokēṣu (Uvāta, p. 177). This is quoted at Kauśitaki Brāhmaṇa 8.8. 

It is clear that the deviations of the Rgveda Prātiṣākhyas from our Rgveda described above constitute strong evidence that this Prātiṣākhyas primarily deals with a version of the Rgveda that differed in some points from ours. The mention of other views that agree with our Rgveda indicates that the author of the Rgveda Prātiṣākhyas was also, be it secondarily, familiar with our text.

It is not so certain what conclusions can be drawn from the fact that the Rgveda Prātiṣākhyas refers to verses that do not occur in our Rgveda, as shown above. One might base oneself upon the hypothesis of Scheftelowitz (1906: 11-13) that all verses contained in the Rgveda Khila belonged to other Śākhās of the Rgveda, and argue that all the verses referred to in the Prātiṣākhyas and not occurring in our Rgveda belonged to the Śākhā of the Prātiṣākhyas. Many of these verses, as we have seen, do indeed occur in the Rgveda Khila, and some of the remaining ones are quoted in the ancillary literature, which also seems to agree with the thesis that they once belonged to at least some version of the Rgveda.

Unfortunately, it is far from certain that Scheftelowitz’s hypothesis regarding the Khilas is correct (Renou 1947: 21; Oldenberg 1907: 217-235; Keith 1907: 225-228). Moreover, we know that the Rgveda Prātiṣākhyas does not limit its description to its own version of the Rgveda, for it gives information about our version of it. It is therefore conceivable that the Prātiṣākhyas also commented upon the phonetic shape of verses which did not occur in its own version of the Rgveda. We shall find evidence to show this assumption right.

But if we cannot decide which is the Śākhā to which the Rgveda Prātiṣākhyas primarily belongs on the basis of the verses it refers to, how can we come to know this Śākhā? The answer is easy: The Prātiṣākhyas tells us so itself.

The Rgveda Prātiṣākhyas says in an introductory verse that it comments upon the Śaśtriya version of the Rgveda (verse 7: asya jñānārtham idam uttaratras vāksye śāstram akhilam śatīriye).

Not much can be learned about the Śaśtriya version of the Rgveda from the ancient literature. There is, however, one old work which professes to deal with this same version, viz. the Anuvākānakramani. This work admonishes the Śākalas, in an introductory verse, to hear, in due order, of how many sūktas the Anuvākas consist in the

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1097 If RPr V.24 (341) is really about this line, then Keith's (1920: 396 n) proposal to read pariśreṣṭa for parisṛteṣv is in conflict with the Prātiṣākhyas, for the Prātiṣākhyas prescribes that s will remain unchanged (prakṛtyā).

1098 Note that RPr XVI.87-88 (946-947) seems to indicate that the Subheṣaja hymn did not belong to the ten Maṇḍalas (Oldenberg 1907: 214). These sūtras read: sarvā dāśatayāś etā uttarās tu subheṣaje "All these metres are in the ten Maṇḍalas; the following ones, however, are in the Subheṣaja."

1099 Oldenberg's (1907: 212) suggestion to understand akhila in the sense ‘die Khila übergehend’, ‘was nicht Khila ist’, seems belied by the circumstance that the Rgveda Prātiṣākhyas draws the Vālakhilya hymns into the discussion. See below.
Rgveda, in the Śaśīrīya Samhitā (verse 9: ṛgveda śaśīrīyāyām samhitāyām yathākramam/ pramāṇam anuvākānām sūktaḥ śrūtaḥ śākalāḥ/). A perusal of the Anuvākānukramani brings to light two further differences between the Śaśīrīya version of the Ṛgveda and the one known to us. First, the Śaśīrīya version did not, apparently, contain the Vālakhilya hymns (RV 8.49-59), for it counts 92, instead of 103, hymns in the eighth Maṇḍala (see verse 35: dve caiva sūkta navatīm ca vidyād athāṣṭamam ....; cf. Macdonell 1886: xv).\(^{100}\) Second, the Anuvākānukramani gives two different numbers for the verses contained in the Samhitā (Müller 1860: 220-221; Macdonell 1886: xvi; see also below). If we take the lowest number and compare this with the number of verses in our Ṛgveda, not counting the Vālakhilya hymns, we come to the closest agreement possible, but are still left with 15 extra verses that were apparently part of the Śaśīrīya version of the Ṛgveda (Oldenberg 1888: 498-503, esp. 502).

One more peculiarity of the Śaśīrīya version of the Ṛgveda may have been the following. Verse 43 of the Anuvākānukramani gives as the total number of verses 10580.5. The total number contained in vargas, on the other hand, is 10417 (verses 40-42). This leaves 163.5 verses that are not contained in vargas. The Anuvākānukramani (verses 7, 17, 36, 39) makes a mention of Khilas and adds that for them no anuvākas are stated (verses 17 and 36; Oldenberg 1907: 211 n). Probably also no vargas were stated for the Khilas, for the total number given in the Anuvākānukramani agrees with the number found in our Ṛgveda (Oldenberg 1888: 500; Keith 1907: 228). This would mean that the Khilas referred to in the Anuvākānukramani contained 163 verses.

The Ṛgveda Prātiśākhya and the Anuvākānukramani together have brought to light the following distinguishing features of the Śaśīrīya version of the Ṛgveda. They are distinguishing in the sense that they are not present in our version of the Ṛgveda. If they were all simultaneously present in the Śaśīrīya Śākhā depends on the question how far this Śākhā remained unchanged in the period between the Ṛgveda Prātiśākhya and the Anuvākānukramani. The features are:

(i) The Śaśīrīya Samhitā did not contain the Vālakhilya hymns (RV 8.49-59).
(ii) The Śaśīrīya Samhitā did not contain the sounds \( l \) and \( lh \).\(^{101}\)
(iii) The Śaśīrīya Samhitā doubled its consonants under the circumstances specified in RPr VI.1.13 (378-389).
(iv) The Śaśīrīya Samhitā elided the visarjanīya before a fricative that is itself followed by a voiceless consonant.
(v) The Śaśīrīya Samhitā did not insert \( t \) between \( n \) and \( s \).
(vi) The Śaśīrīya Samhitā had the nasal corresponding to the following explosive in the place of \( m \).
(vii) The Śaśīrīya Samhitā had nasal \( y, l, ū \) in the place of \( m \) before word-initial \( y, l \) and \( v \) respectively.
(viii) The Kramapātha to RV 8.70.9 of the Śaśīrīya school contained the row of five words \( udūśuṇo \) vaso, whereas the Kramapātha known to us has no more than four words: \( udūśuṇaḥ \).

\(^{100}\) The Vālakhilya hymns are none the less dealt with in the Ṛgveda Prātiśākhya (Müller 1891: xlv f.; Schefelowitz 1906: 18 [note that Khila 3.1-8 are the first 8 Vālakhilya hymns, i.e., RV 8.49-56, and Khila 1.6 = RV 8.59]; Oldenberg 1907: 213). This shows again that the Ṛgveda Prātiśākhya did not confine itself to what it found in its own Samhitā.

\(^{101}\) According to Lüders (1923: 298) the Kāṇva recension of the Vājasaneyi Samhitā contained \( l \) and \( lh \), whereas the Mādhyanandina recension did not.
Perhaps we may add:
(i) Vowels occurring in a pause, not being pragṛhyā, were nasalized in the Śaiśirīya  Saṃhitā.
(x) The Śaiśirīya Saṃhitā contained 15 verses more than our Saṃhitā (not counting the Vālakhilya hymns).

(ii) The Śaiśirīya Śākhā had Khilas, which contained 163,5 verses. We note that the differences between the Śaiśirīya and the Śākala versions are no smaller than the ones which are known to exist between the Śākala and Bāśkala versions (Renou 1947: 20, 22; Oldenberg 1888: 490 f.; Singh 1975).

   A large number of these characteristics, which differentiate the Śaiśirīya Śākhā from our version of the R̄gveda, are found in the R̄gveda Ms. from Kashmir, on the basis of which Scheftelowitz made his edition of the Khilas (1906), and of which he gave a fuller description later (1907). How much agreement exists between this Kashmir R̄gveda (KRV) and the Śaiśirīya Śākhā may become clear when we go through the points enumerated.

(i) The KRV does not contain the Vālakhilya hymns; they are included in the Khilas (Scheftelowitz 1920: 194 n; 1906: 35).
(ii) The KRV contains l, but not lh for which the Śāradā script (in which the Kashmir Ms. is written) has no sign. 102
(iii) The KRV often doubles t and dh after a short vowel or anusvāra before y and v (Scheftelowitz, 1907: 112). This agrees with RPr VI.1 (378), which prescribes doubling of consonants which are initial in a group of consonants, after a vowel or anusvāra (svarānusvāropahito dvir ucyate samyogādīḥ sa krame ‘vikrame san).
(iv) The KRV drops visarjanīya (or s) before s followed by a voiceless consonant. Examples of s+s>t, s+s>sth, s+s>sp, s+s>sk can be found in Scheftelowitz 1907: 104-105.

(v) The KRV does not insert t between n and s (Scheftelowitz 1907: 118).
(vi) The KRV always has the nasal corresponding to the following explosive in the place of m (Scheftelowitz 1907: 115-16).
(vii) The KRV writes mvy and myy where m precedes v and y respectively, initial in a word; m+l and n+l become mll or ml (Scheftelowitz, 1907: 116). This seems closer to vy, yy, ll than what we find in our Ṛgveda (mv, my and ml respectively).
(viii) About the Kramapātha of the KRV we have no information.
(ix) Scheftelowitz 1907 gives no information regarding nasalization of vowels in pausa;
(x) nor about possible additional verses in the KRV.
(xi) The KRV has Khilas, but the number of verses contained in them is greater than 163,5.

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102 That the Kashmir Ms. has a sign for l was pointed out to me by Michael Witzel. It had not been noticed by Scheftelowitz (1906: 47). For the form of this sign, see Renou & Filliozat 1953: 692. The presence of l in the KRV may be due to śakalization, which also changed d into l in the Ṛgveda Prātīśākhya (see below). That the KRV considered itself to be the Śākala Saṃhitā (Scheftelowitz 1906: 168) merely strengthens this supposition. Note that the orthography of the concluding portion of the Kashmir Ms. that contains this information “weicht ... schon ein wenig von den ihm vorangehenden vedischen Texten ab, indem v und y nach einem Anusvāra nicht verdoppelt werden. Ausl. m wird hier vor anl. Sibilant, h, r, Nasal, Palatal gewöhnlich zum Anusvāra” (Scheftelowitz 1906: 167).
The agreement between the KRV and the Śaiśirīya Śākhā is clearly great, but not complete. It cannot be explained by assuming that someone 'improved' the text of the Rgveda on the basis of the Rgveda Prātiśākhya. Several circumstances exclude this possibility. The most important is perhaps that the KRV contains features which are characterized as faults (doṣa) in the Prātiśākhya. The KRV often contains single consonants where it should have two of them (Scheftelowitz 1907: 105-107); this is a fault according to RPr XIV.16 (774) and XIV.58 (816). Further, at some points our Rgveda is in closer agreement with the Prātiśākhya than the KRV. RPr IV.18 (237) says that c is inserted to make -ṅ cch- according to some. The Śaiśirīya Śākhā therefore probably had -ṅ ch-, as has our Rgveda. The KRV, on the other hand, has -ṅ ch- only when a vowel (or r) follows, when a consonant follows it has -ṅ cch- (Scheftelowitz 1907: 120).

It is of some importance to note that the KRV is independent of the Padapātha. This appears most clearly from the deviant readings in the Vālakhilīya hymns (Schroeder 1898: 283; Scheftelowitz 1906: 36-45), but also from those in the main body of the KRV (Scheftelowitz 1907: 85-90).

The above suggests that the version of the Rgveda known from the Kashmir Ms. is closely related to, but not fully identical with, the version primarily described in the Rgveda Prātiśākhya. The latter was compared with, and perhaps to some extent adjusted to, the Padapātha, which the former was apparently not. The two versions are so close that we are tempted to think that the KRV is a descendant of the Śaiśirīya Saṃhitā, or perhaps both are descendants from a common ancestor.

[Caution is however required. Some (or even all) of the similarities between the KRV and the Śaiśirīya Saṃhitā may be due to other factors. Witzel (1980: 45-46), for example, has argued that the absence of t between n and s (point (v) above) is a peculiarity of the Veda tradition of Kashmir: it is also found in the Kaṭha material from Kashmir and in the Kashmir Ms. of the Paippalāda Saṃhitā. It might of course be maintained that this is explained by the fact that in Kashmir the prestigious Rgveda was preserved in the Śaiśirīya version, which contained this feature. Alternatively, this feature might have existed independently in the KRV and, say, the Kaṭha school. Witzel thinks that it came about under the influence of the Kaṭha school. The case of anunāsika before v, y, l (point (vii) above) is similar; see Witzel 1980: 21-22.]

There are some more works that claim to belong to the Śaiśirīya Śākhā. One of them is the Vikṛtvillī, which says of itself that "the eight vikṛtis (modified ways of recitation of the Veda, viz.,) jaṭā etc. are characterized, not too extensively, by the great Seer Vyāḍi, with respect to the Śaiśirīya text" (verse 4, p. 1: śaiśirīye samāmnāye vyādinaiva mahārsinā/ jaṭādyā vikṛtīr aṣṭau laṅṣante nātvistaram/; note the 'archaic' (?) Nom. Pl. vikṛtīḥ). It seems that the author of the Vikṛtvillī blindly followed the Rgveda Prātiśākhya and Anuvaṅkānukramaṇī in expressing its allegiance to the Śaiśirīya Saṃhitā, for his Rgveda did not agree with what we know about the Śaiśirīya Saṃhitā in at least one respect. In verse 13 we read: dakārādividhānaṃ tat svarāntahparivartanam "That

103 Another Rgveda Ms. from Kashmir, discovered by M. A. Stein in 1896, shows striking similarities with the KRV, at least in points (iii), (iv), (vi) and (vii), and possibly in others (Dumont 1962). Interestingly, this Ms. claims to belong to the Āśvalāyana Śākhā. B. B. Chaubey’s (2009) recent edition of the Āśvalāyana Saṃhitā does not appear to be based on this Ms. See further Houben 2015: 13 f.
rule regarding ā etc. is a change [which takes place when ā etc. are] between vowels.” We know that in the Śākala Samhitā ā becomes ṭ when between two vowels, but not in the Śāsiṛīya Samhitā (see above). The Vikrīvalī therefore deals either with the same version of the Rgveda as ours, or at best with a śākalized version of the Śāsiṛīya Samhitā. Mimāṃsaka (1973: I: 278, 291) has argued on other grounds that the Vikrīvalī is a late work. See also Abhyankar & Devasthan 1978: XIV-XV. This makes it all the more likely that this text concerns itself with our Rgveda.

The same is true of the Śāsiṛīyaśikṣā. This treatise describes a Samhitā that knows the sounds ṭ and ṭh (here called dusprṣṭa; see p. 2, l. 22) and prescribes insertion of t between n and s (p. 5, l. 96; p. 16, l. 307-08). In general it may be said that this Śikṣā follows the Rgveda Prātiṣākhya upon its heels.

What more do we know about the Śāsiṛīya Śākhā of the Rgveda? Verse 9 of the Anuvākānukramāṇi (quoted above) suggests that there was a close connection between the Śāsiṛīya Samhitā and the Śākala. The same is done by verse 36, which reads: tān pāraṇe sākale śāsiṛīye vadaṃṭi śiṣṭā na khileṣu viprāḥ "The learned Brahmins do not state those (i.e., anuvākas) in the Khilas in the Śākala, in the Śāsiṛīya text." The most natural interpretation of this verse leads us to the assumption that the Śākala text and the Śāsiṛīya text were one and the same. This is in perfect agreement with verse 9, and not contradicted by anything in the Anuvākānukramāṇi. It is not, however, in agreement with the Rgveda Prātiṣākhya. This Prātiṣākhya, as we have seen, contrasts on three occasions its own view (which is the view of the Śāsiṛīyas), with the view of the Śākala. The views of these Śākala are embodied in our Rgveda, so that we have no reason to doubt that our Rgveda is the text of the Śākala. And our Rgveda deviates in two further respects from the description of the Anuvākānukramāṇi (see above).

We might try to interpret verses 9 and 36 in such a way that the Śāsiṛīyas are a branch of the Śākala Śākhā. This interpretation would be in agreement with the Purāṇas, which tell us that Śākalya taught the Rgveda to five pupils, one of them being Śāsiṛi or Śiśā (Sagar Rai 1964: 101-105; Renou 1947: 52-56). Unfortunately, our most ancient sources of information regarding the Śākhās of the Rgveda make no mention of such a subdivision of the Śākala, or indeed any other, Śākhā. They are Patañjali’s Mahābhāṣya (Vol. I, p. 9, l. 22) and the Mahābhārata (12.330.32). Also the Caranāvyaśa (1.5; p. 253) and the Caranāvyaśha contained in the Pariśītas of the Atharvaveda (49.1.6; Bolling-Negelein 1909: 335) keep silence on this point. Moreover, this interpretation agrees as little with the Rgveda Prātiṣākhya as the former one. The account of the Purāṇas may have been an attempt to explain such passages as the two verses under discussion of the Anuvākānukramāṇi. Renou’s (1947: 54-56) attempt to show the “well-foundedness of certain purānic traditions” (p. 54) may well have succeeded in doing the opposite: demonstrating on the basis of what meagre information the Purāṇas built their account. When, e.g., the Brhaddevata mentions the names of Baudhyā and Māthara in a passage which deals with the Bāskala version of the Rgveda, and the Purāṇas make Baudhyā and (Agni-)māthara into pupils of Bāskala, then the Purāṇas may very well have done so in

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1004 Brhaddevata 8.84-85 (ed. Macdonell); 8.78-79 (ed. Tokunaga). Neither of these two editions reads Baudhyā in the first verse (Tokunaga not even in the critical notes), but Renou (1947: 54), following Bhagavad Datta, reads this verse thus: āśiṣo yogam etam hi baudhyo ‘rdharcaṇa manyate ‘telle est la combinaison de prière que vise Baudhyā au moyen de cette demistrophe”.
order to explain this passage of the *Bhaddevatā*. We must, therefore, be careful with the use we make of the Purānic account of the Vedic schools.

We must also be careful not to draw conclusions from the fact that the only two commentators whose comments on the eighth Manḍala of the *Rgveda* have survived — Sāyana and Venkaṭamādhava — failed to comment on sūktas 49-59, the Vālakhilya hymns, which were absent from the Śaśirīya *Samhitā*. There is no reason to think that these hymns were late additions to the text. On the contrary, they are accompanied by a Padapāṭha, and belonged therefore — in spite of Scheftelowitz 1920: 194-198 — to a version of the *Rgveda* even before the time of the *Rgveda Prātiśākhya* (see further Müller 1891: xlv f.). Probably these commentators, too, were led astray by the *Anuvākāṅkramaṇī*, as were Śadguruśiśya, who commented on the *Sarvāṅkramaṇī* (Müller 1891: xlv), and perhaps the author of the *Sarvāṅkramaṇī*, seven of the nine Mss. of which used by Macdonell (1886: 30 n) leave out the Vālakhilyas (Scheftelowitz 1920: 194).

It seems that in the *Anuvākāṅkramaṇī* we are witnessing an attempt to unite the Śaśirīya and the Śākala Śākhā of the *Rgveda*; more precisely, an attempt on the part of the Śaśirīya Śākhā to be considered identical with, or part of, the Śākala Śākhā. This supposition, which solves the difficulty raised by the contradictory information provided by the *Rgveda Prātiśākhya* and the *Anuvākāṅkramaṇī*, is further supported by number of facts, which will now be discussed.

To begin with, both the *Rgveda Prātiśākhya* and the *Anuvākāṅkramaṇī* mention Śākalya. The Prātiśākhya gives the latter's opinion regarding certain matters in a number of sūtras. In one case Śākalya's opinion deviates from our *Rgveda*, i.e., in RPr IV.13 (232) (Renou 1947: 22 n; Müller 1869: 8). This suggests that the author of the Prātiśākhya knew that Śākalya's opinion was not always identical with the opinion of the Śākalaś, even though the latter derived their name from the former: ‘Śākala' means

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105 The great length of Adhyāya 6.4 (Roth 1846: 34-36), which encompasses the Vālakhilya hymns, merely suggests that the division into Adhyāyas originally belonged to a Śākhā which did not contain the Vālakhilya hymns, possibly the Śaśirīya Śākhā. This is confirmed by the fact that in the KRV the division into Adhyāyas is the main one (Scheftelowitz 1906: 32-33).

106 It also explains why the KRV claims to belong to the Śākala Śākhā.

107 Also from Pāṇini’s *Aṣṭādhyāyī* we learn that Śākalya's opinion did not always agree with our *Rgveda* (Geldner 1901: 145); similarly from the *Vājasaneyi Prātiśākhya* (Weber 1858: 72-73). At KRV it seems that also the later tradition discovered the disagreement between Śākalya and the Śākalyas. They called it (or so it seems) by calling the final redactor of the *Rgveda* 'Śākalya’ instead of 'Śākalya’, as he is called in Patañjali’s *Mahābhyāṣya* (vol. I, p. 347, l. 3). Müller (1860: 237) cites a verse from Śadguruśiśya’s commentary on Kātyāyana’s *Sarvāṅkramaṇī*, which reads: śākalyasya samhitaikā bāṣkalasya tathāparā “There was one Śākhā of Śākalya, another of Bāṣkala” (tr. Müller 1869: 232). The author of the *Viṅkirvallī* (supposedly Vyādi) says: namāmi śākalaścāryam śākalyam sthavīram tathā. This can mean either of two things: "I bow to the teacher Śākalya and to the old Śākalya"; or: "I bow to [Śākalya] the teacher of the Śākalyas, and to the old Śākalya". The second interpretation is closer to the *Rgveda Prātiśākhya*, which seems to distinguish between Śākalya and the old Śākalya. The commentator Gangādhara Bhattācārya, nevertheless, chooses in his *Viṅkiraṃvad* for the first interpretation (p. 6). On p. 7, moreover, he quotes some verses (reproduced below) which speak of Śākalya and his five pupils. Renou (1947: 24b) mentions another occurrence of the personal name ‘Śākalya’.

Śākalya is again mentioned on several other occasions in the *Rgveda Prātiśākhya*. In RPr III.13 (199) he is made to uphold the view that in the case of praślēṣa sandhi of two short vowels ī, and in the case of kṣaipra and abhinīhitā sandhi, the resulting vowel gets svarīta accent, if the
pupils of Śākalya’ (śākalyasya cchāṭrāḥ), as Patañjali’s Mahābhāṣya (vol. II, p. 210, I. 7-8) tells us. In short, the Rgveda Prātiṣākhya presents us Śākalya as a historical person, who had held certain views. In the Anuvākānukramaṇī, on the other hand, Śākalya is promoted to the rank of having seen the Veda (verse 45). This indicates that the Anuvākānukramaṇī is later than the Rgveda Prātiṣākhya, farther removed in time from Śākalya; it further suggests why the Śakaḷa Śākha could absorb the Śaiśiриya Śākha; if the Veda had been seen by Śākalya, only the Śakaḷas, Śākalya’s followers, could be in possession of the correct form of the Veda.

Secondly, the Rgveda Prātiṣākhya mentions many authorities, the Anuvākānukramaṇī knows only of two Śākhās. Müller (1860: 142-143) gives the following list of authorities met with in the Prātiṣākhya: Ānyatareya,1109 Gārgya, Paṇcālas, Prācyas, Bābhraya, Māndukēya, Yāska, Vedamitra, Vyāli, Śākatayana, Śākala, Śākalya, Śākalya-pitr (sthaṭvira), Śaunaka (?). The Śakaḷas represent, to all appearances, the version of the Rgveda known to us.1110 Vedamitra is mentioned once and seems to be one of the Śakaḷas (see above).1111 Māndukēya is, as his name suggests, to be connected with the Māndūkāyanas, who had an own version of the Rgveda according to the Caranavyūha (1.5; p. 253). Behind one or more of the other names may hide representatives of the Bāṣkala Śākha, because the Prātiṣākhya refers to a verse that we only know to have been part of the Bāṣkala Samhitā (as indicated above). The Anuvākānukramaṇī, on the other hand, makes only mention of the Śakaḷas and the Bāṣkala (verses 21 and 36), and of course the Śaiśiриyas, but these last as identical with, or perhaps a subdivision of, the Śakaḷas. It is, of course, possible that the author of the Anuvākānukramaṇī simply had no urge or occasion to vent his knowledge regarding the other Śākhās. More probably the process of absorption and identification had considerably reduced the number of Śākhās.

first of the two vowels was uḍāṭta (ıkārayoṣ ca praśeṣe kṣapiaḥbhinihiteṣu ca/ uḍattapūrvarūpeṣu śākalyasyaivaṁ ācaret/). This agrees with our Rgveda. On three other occasions it is not possible to decide on agreement or otherwise. RPr II.81 (185) and III.22 (208) give Śākalya’s opinion on details of pronunciation which are not reflected in writing. [The former of these two sūtras speaks of the ‘old Śākalya’ (śākalyasya sthāvarasya), which leaves us in doubt if not someone else is meant.] RPr XII.31 (739) merely tells us in what sense the teachers Vyāli, Śākalya and Gārgya used the term samāpādaya. RPr IV.4-5 (223-224), finally, ascribe opinions to Śākalya’s father, which agree with our Rgveda.


1110 This follows from the passages collected above, and from the fact that the other opinions ascribed to the Śakaḷas in the Rgveda Prātiṣākhya nowhere conflict with our Rgveda. The remaining passages that use the word śākala are as follows. RPr I.75 (76) mentions in passing that the particle u is nasalized and lengthened, according to the Śakaḷas (or Śākalya; Uvata [p. 53] explains śākalena as śākalena matena) in the Padapāṭha (ukāraṣa cetikaranemena yukto raktro ’prkto drāghitah śākalena). RPr VI.20 (396) ff. ascribe some particular kind of pronunciation to the Śakaḷas, which it is hard to check against existing practice (assuming that such niceties of pronunciation remained unchanged, which is not certain). RPr XI.21 (633) speaks about a śākalam which people often remember/cite (smaranti) regarding the correct recitation of the Kramapāṭha. Uvata (p. 337) explains this word as śākalaviddhaṇam ‘precept of the Śakaḷas/Śākalya’; Müller translates ‘Śakaḷa-Lehrbuch’.

1111 The Purāṇas identify Vedamitra (sometimes called ‘Devamitra’) with Śākalya (Viṣṇu Purāṇa 3.4.20; Vaiyu Purāṇa 1.60.63; Bhāgavata Purāṇa 12.6.57; all quoted in Sagar Rai 1964: 98-100). They may have based this identification on the mention of Vedamitra in the Rgveda Prātiṣākhya.
The last fact that supports the thesis that the Śaśirīya Śākhā came to be absorbed by the Śākala Śākhā is perhaps the most striking of all. We have seen above that the Rgveda Prātiśākhya is against the substitution of l for ḍ in its own Śākhā. But the Rgveda Prātiśākhya itself shows this forbidden feature (Shastri 1959: 63)! The sound l occurs in quotations as well as outside them, as follows. In quotations: RPr II.71 (175) ratholha; 72 (176) viṣṇa; IV.49 (268) ilāyāḥ, ilah; V.55 (371) dūlabha; 59 (375) heḷaḥ; VII.19 (451) mṛlayadhyāṃ; 33 (465) mṛla, iliṣya; VIII.34 (521) mṛlayantah; 35 (522) mṛlayā; XI.40 (652) dūlabha; XVI.17 (876) viṭataḥ; 73 (932) krīḷan; XVIII.53 (1054) ḍeḷ. Not in quotations: the word vyāḷi occurs 5 times (RPr III.23 [209]; 28 [214]; VI.46 [419]; XIII.31 [739]; 37 [745]), saṇ followed by a vowel 9 times (RPr IX.35 [572]; XVI.11 [871]; 13 [872]; 16 [875]; 23 [882]; 28 [887]; 34 [892]; 35 [894]; 75 [934]), pīḷaṇa 4 times\(^{1111}\) (RPr XIV.3.761; 11 [769]; 17 [775]; 29 [787]), soḷaṇa 3 times (RPr XVII.44 [995]; 45 [996]; XVIII.54 [1055]), vrīḷana\(^{19}\) (RPr XIV.6 [764]), and kṣveḷana\(^{19}\) (RPr XIV.20 [788]), each once. The quoted word nissāṭ followed by avikramā becomes nissāḷ in RPr XIV.36 (794). The Prātiśākhya of the Śaśirīya Śākhā has thus adjusted itself to the Śākala Śākhā.

So there is reason to believe that the Śaśirīya Śākhā was once an independent branch of the Rgveda and disappeared completely as the result of a process of absorption and identification. The last step of this process is taken in the Anuvākaṇukramani, which virtually denies the existence of an independent Śaśirīya Śākhā. An earlier step was taken in the Rgveda Prātiśākhya, in that it commented, not only on the Śaśirīya version of the Rgveda, but simultaneously also on other versions. We find traces of the former existence of the Śaśirīya Śākhā in the refusal of the commentators to comment on the Vālakhilya hymns, and in the Purānic accounts. There is, however, no reason to think that these later authors had access to important sources of information regarding the Śaśirīya Śākhā beyond what they found in the Rgveda Prātiśākhya and the Anuvākaṇukramani.

The absorbing Śākhā is here the Śākala Śākhā. It seems likely that the absorbing force of the Śākala Śākhā increased as the sanctity of Śākalya grew.

It is interesting that the same absorbing force of the Śākala Śākhā shows itself in the work of a much later author, this time with respect to the Bāskala Śākhā, the only other Śākhā which survived for some time besides the Śākala Śākhā (Renou 1947: 20). Gangādhara Bhaṭṭācārya’s Vikṛitaḥmaṇḍū, commenting on the Vikṛitivallī (1.4) ascribed to Vyāḍi, contains these two verses (p. 7; quoted by Bhagwaddatta [1920: 3]):

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{sākalasya śatam śīṣyā naiśṭhikabrahmacārīnāḥ} & \\
\text{paṇca tatra grhaṇās te dharmiṇāś ca kuṭumbīnāḥ} & \\
\text{śaśirō bāskalāḥ sāṅkho}^{1111} & \\
\text{vāṣyaś caivāśvalāyanaḥ} & \\
\text{paṇcaite śākalāḥ śīṣyāḥ sāṅkhahṛdāpṛavartakaḥ} & \\
\text{Śākala}^{1114} & \text{had hundred pupils, perfect brahmacārins. Five among them were householders, and virtuous heads of a family: Śaśirā, Bāskala, Śaṅkha, Vāṣya}
\end{align*}
\]

\(^{1111}\) Müller’s (1869) edition writes pīḍana, vṛdāṇa, and kṣvedana, but has l in all the other cases.

\(^{1113}\) The edition reads sāṃkhya. Another edition — without title page, but apparently edited by Satya Vrata (Śarman or Bhaṭṭācārya?) and published by the Satya Press, Calcutta, 1890 — has sāṅkho, which must be preferred on account of its relatedness to sāṅkhāyana.

\(^{1114}\) On Śākala, see above.
and Āśvalāyana. These five pupils of Śākala produced the differences between the Śākhās.

Clearly this account of the origin of the Śākhās is influenced by the Purāṇas (cf. Sagar Rai 1964: 102-105). But here we find among Śākala's pupils also Bāskala mentioned! In other words, the Bāskala Śākhā is here not represented as an independent Śākhā, but as a subdivision of the Śākala Śākhā!

It is tempting to think that this process of absorption and unification existed already before the time of the Rgveda Prātiśākhyā and is ultimately responsible for the fixed form which characterizes our Rgveda, down to the minutest details. If this is true, we shall have to abandon the idea that the Śākhās of the Rgveda all presuppose its finally redacted text (Renou 1947: 21, 35). On the contrary, the final redaction will then have to be considered the final outcome of this process. This would of course agree with the evidence presented and discussed elsewhere.1115

**Appendix VII: Did Patañjali know Pāṇini's original text?**

Many modern scholars hold that Patañjali did not know Pāṇini's Aṣṭādhyāyī in its original form.1116 Their position may need revision. There are clear indications that Patañjali believed he knew the text of the Aṣṭādhyāyī in the form in which Pāṇini had taught it to his pupils.

Consider first a passage in the Mahābhāṣya that shows that Patañjali knew sūtra 1.4.1 in two different forms.1117 It is tempting to interpret this as proof that the textual tradition through which Patañjali knew the Aṣṭādhyāyī was insecure. Patañjali himself interprets it quite differently. Having pointed out that this one sūtra has the two forms ā kādārād ekā saṃjñā and prāk kādārāt param kāryam, he concludes that the Master has taught it in these two forms to his pupils.1118 Far from worrying about the correct form of the sūtra, as a modern philologist might, Patañjali is convinced he has access to the text that Pāṇini himself had taught to his pupils, which includes two forms for P. 1.4.1.

The same is true for the passage that raises the question which is the correct pronunciation of the vowel a in the first Śivasūtra. What is at stake is the interpretation of the following vārttika (Mahā-bh I p. 15 l. 2):

\[
\text{akārasya vivṛtopadeśa ākārāgraḥanārthah (vt. 1)} \\
\text{Teaching of a as open in order to grasp ā.}
\]

Patañjali raises the following question (Mahā-bh I p. 15 l. 9-12):

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1115 Greater Magadha § III.2 (The Rgveda at the time of Pāṇini) and Appendix IV, pp. 204 f. & 335 ff.
1116 E.g., Kielhorn 1896; Thiére 1935: 120 f.; Renou 1940: 12 n. 3; Scharfe 1977: 89 f.
1117 The Mahābhāṣya also contains indications to show that Patañjali knew P. 6.1.115 in two different forms: nāntahpādam avyapare and prakṛtyāntahpādam avyapare; see Kielhorn 1887: 182 [230].
kim punar idam vivṛtasopadiśyamānāsyā prayojanam anvākhyaṇyata āhosvit
samvṛtasopadiśyamānāsyā vivṛtopadeśaś codyate/ vivṛtasopadiśyamānāsyā
prayojanam anvākhyaṇyate/ katham jñāyate/ yad ayam a a (P. 8.4.68) ity akārasya
vivṛtasya samvṛtatāpratyāpattim śāsti/

-Is here the purpose explained of [the vowel a] that is being taught as open; or is
here rather the teaching as open proposed for [the vowel a] that is being taught as
closed?
-The purpose of [the vowel a] that is being taught as open is here explained.
-How do you know?
-Because [the Master] teaches the reinstoration of closedness for the open vowel a
in [sūtra 8.4.68:] a a.1119

It seems clear that Patañjali did not know the correct form of the vowel a in the first
Śivasūtra and uses an inference to find out. But this does not necessarily mean that there
had been a break in the tradition. The open vowel a is not one of the vowels of Sanskrit,
and Patañjali says so himself: naiva loke na ca vede 'kāro vivṛto 'stī (Mahā-bh I p. 15 l.
14). It follows that no Indian script has a character for this sound, and oral tradition
would inevitably pronounce is as closed. With or without interrupted tradition (and with
or without written tradition), Patañjali would be confronted with the same problem, viz.,
the difficulty of deciding whether the vowel a in the first Śivasūtra must be considered
open or closed.

The passage is most often cited to prove that there had been a break in the tradition before Patañjali occurs under P. 1.3.11 (svaritenādhikāraḥ). It is supposed to
show that Patañjali no longer knew which words in the Aṣṭādhyāyī had the svarita accent.
Franz Kielhorn (1896) has given this passage its henceforth classical interpretation. He
correctly sums up part of the passage, as follows (pp. 29-30 [290-291]).1120

Die Paribhāṣā svaritenādhikāraḥ lehrt, das Pāṇini gewisse Worte, Suffixe u. s. w.
seiner Regeln mit einem Svarita versieht um zu zeigen, dass jene Worte u. s. w.
auch in der Folge zu ergänzen sind. Sein Verfahren entspringt dem Wunsche, sich
die wiederholte Setzung ein und desselben Wortes in jeder der Regeln, in der das
Wort gelten soll, zu ersparen.

Hiergegen liesse sich sagen, dass sich das, was durch den Gebrauch des
Svarita und die Paribhāṣā, die seinen Zweck erklärt, angeblich erreicht werden soll,
sohn aus der Praxis des gewöhnlichen Lebens ergibt. Wenn man mir sagt

---

1119 On the unjustified assumption that P. 8.4.68 was not part of the original Aṣṭādhyāyī, see
Deshpande 1975.
1120 Mahā-bh I p. 271 l. 18 - p. 272 l. 10 : svaritenādhikāraḥ (P. 1.3.11)// kimartham idam ucyate/
adhikāraḥ pratiyogam tasyānirdeśārthaḥ (vt. 1)// adhikāraḥ kriyate pratiyogam
tasyānirdeśārthaḥ//...// na vā nirdīṣyamānādhikṛtavād yathā loke (vt. 2)// na vaitat prayojanam
asti/ kim karaṇam/ nirdīṣyamānādhikṛtavād yathā loke/ nirdīṣyamānādhikṛtavād yathā loke/
adhikṛtam adhikṛtam gamyate/ tad yathā/ devadattaya gaur diyatām yajñadattaya viṇumitrāyeti/ gaur iti gamyate/ evam ihāpi
padarujavāsasprāga ghaṇ (P. 3.3.16) sr sthire (P. 3.3.17) bhāve (P. 3.3.18) ghaṇ iti gamyate/
anyanirdeśas tu nivartakas tasmāt paribhāṣā (vt. 3)// anyanirdeśas tu loke nivartako bhavati/ tad
yathā/ devadattaya gaur diyatām yajñadattaya kambalo viṇumitrāya ceti/ kambalo gor nivartako
bhavati/ evam ihāpy abhividhau bhāva inuṇ (P. 3.3.44) ghaṇo nivartakāḥ syāt/ tasmāt paribhāṣā/
tasmāt paribhāṣā kartavyā//

Allein ein solcher Einwand wäre nicht stichhaltig. Wenn Jemand sagt ‘gieb dem Devadatta eine Kuh, ein Gewand dem Yajñadatta, und dem Viñumitra’, so meint er doch, das Viñumitra ein Gewand und keine Kuh erhalten soll. Wollten wir nun in der Grammatik wie im gewöhnlichen Leben verfahren, so würden wir, wenn Pāṇini z. B., nachdem er in iii, 3, 16 ff. die Anfügung des Suffixes ghaṇ gelehrt hat, in iii, 3, 44 die Anfügung des Suffixes inuṇ vorschreibt, und dann in iii, 3, 45 kein Suffix ausdrücklich nennt, für die Regel 45 inuṇ aus 44, und nicht ghaṇ aus 16 ergänzen. Das wäre aber nicht was Pāṇini will; und um einer solchen falschen Erklärung vorzubeugen hat er hier das Suffix ghaṇ mit dem Svarita versehen, und hat uns die Paribhāṣā svaretanādhikāraḥ gegeben, nach der das so mit dem Svarita versehene ghaṇ trotz des dazwischen tretenden Suffixes inuṇ aus iii, 3, 16 in iii, 3, 45 fortgilt. Die Praxis der Grammatik ist eben eine andere als die des gewöhnlichen Lebens.

So far, Kielhorn’s account is correct. He clearly shows that up to this point nothing suggests that Patañjali did not know which words in the Aṣṭādhyāyī have the svarita accent. Quite the contrary, the passage creates the impression that Patañjali knew that the suffix ghaṇ in P. 3.3.16 had this accent. Kielhorn then raises some critical questions (p. 30 [291]).

Nachdem so die Notwendigkeit des Svarita und der Paribhāṣā gezeigt ist, wird darauf hingewiesen, dass wir darüber, wie weit ein [A]dhikāra gelte, durch den vorliegenden Text der Grammatik des Pāṇini nicht belehrt werden. Nun könnte man vielleicht behaupten, Pāṇini habe sich des Svarita bedient und die Paribhāṣā svaretanādhikāraḥ gegeben, gerade um zu lehren, wie weit ein Adhikāra gelte. Svaretanādhikāraḥ sei nämlich nicht in die zweī Worte svaritena adhikāraḥ, sondern in die drei Worte svarite na adhikāraḥ zu zerlegen, und bedeute demnach, ein Adhikāra höre auf zu gelten wo sich ein Svarita zeige. Hiernach würde z. B. ein in der Regel v, 1, 32 gesetzter Svarita andeuten, dass die Worte dvitīpārvarī der Regel v, 1, 30 in v, 1, 32 nicht mehr gelten. Eine solche Erklärung

1121 Mahā-bh I p. 272 l. 11-20 : adhikāraparimāṇājñānam tu bhavati/ na jāyate kiyaṇam avadhiṃ adhikāro ’nuvaritata iti/ adhikāraparimāṇa jñānārtham tu adhikāraparimāṇa jñānārtham eva tarhy ayaṃ yogo vaktavyaḥ/ adhikāraparimāṇam jñāsyāmi/ kathāṃ punah svaritenādhikāra ity anenaḥdikāraparimāṇam śakyaṃ vijñātum/ evaṃ vakṣyāmi/ svarite nādhikāra iti/ svaritum dṛṣṭvādikāro na bhavatūtī/ kenedāṃ adhikāro bhaviṣyati/ laukīko ’dhikāraḥ nādhikāra iti ced uktaṃ (vt. 5)/ kim uktam/ anyanirdeshas tu nivartakas tasmāt paribhāṣeṣī/

1122 Kielhorn adds the following note: “Ich bemerke ausdrücklich, dass der Sinn nicht ist, ein durch den Svarita bezeichneten Adhikāra höre auf zu gelten, wo sich ein anderer Svarita zeige. Gemäss der hier vorgeschlagenen Erklärung wird der Adhikāra überhaupt nicht durch einen Svarita bezeichnet.”
This time Kielhorn moves away from the Mahābhāṣya by adding an example that does not occur in that text (he takes it from Kaiyata's commentary). This addition is not innocent. Patañjali’s text has no example, and immediately discards the new position. The added example creates the impression that Patañjali and Kātyāyana give the svarita accent to just any words of the Aṣṭādhyāyī according to their liking. In the chosen example they presumably add it in P. 5.1.32 in order to prevent that the words dviṃtṝīṛvātī from a preceding sūtra be continued. But the Mahābhāṣya itself does not suggest anything of the kind. It rather suggests that the known svarita accents that occur in the text that Pāṇini had taught to his pupils could play the role of indicating the end of an adhikāra; this possibility is rejected without discussion. Nothing in the Mahābhāṣya passage obliges us to believe that Patañjali did not know the words or sentences that had been given the svarita accent by Pāṇini.

The Mahābhāṣya on P. 1.3.11 then discusses other means to indicate the end of an adhikāra. This discussion has nothing to do with the svarita accent. Kātyāyana makes two proposals, which Patañjali rejects. Patañjali himself then rejects his own initial interpretation of the sūtra, stating that the traditional interpretation of grammar renders this function of P. 1.3.11 superfluous. Nothing in this passage suggests that he did not know which words have the svarita accent. But Patañjali goes further. At the end of the discussion of this sūtras he proposes that it has three functions. These three functions he evidently invents himself, even without the support of a vārttika. All three are rather recherché, and no modern researcher would be tempted to believe that they correspond to Pāṇini's original interpretation of the sūtra. Patañjali proposes at this point to improve Pāṇini’s grammar. The suggested improvements include the proposal to give a svarita accent to certain words that clearly did not yet have it. Here Patañjali uses the verbal forms svarayisyate and svarayisyete "will be pronounced with the svarita accent", which he had not used before. One example must here suffice. Patañjali proposes to add the svarita accent to the word strī in the sūtra gostriyor upasarjanasya (P. 1.2.48) to indicate that this word strī signifies the adhikāra striyām (P. 4.1.3). The word strī in P. 1.2.48 refers in this way to stems with feminin suffixes, and not to just any feminin word.

We can draw three conclusions from what precedes:

(i) The Mahābhāṣya under P. 1.3.11 does not provide us with proof that Patañjali did not know Pāṇini's original svarita accents.

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1123 Cp. Mahā-bh. I p. 273 l. 3-5: samdehamāṭram etad bhavati sarvasamoṃdeheṣu cedam upatiṣṭhate vyākhyānato viśeṣapratipattir na hi samdehāda alakṣaṇam itiṁunghaṇa iti samdehe ghaṇa iti vyākhyāśyaṅaḥ.

1124 This use of the future passive corresponds to the way in which Patañjali proposes adding elements to an already existing gana: ...ādiṣu pāthah kariṣyate (Ojihara 1970: 81). In both cases additions are concerned to elements that are already present.

1125 Mahā-bh. I p. 273 l. 8-10: gostriyor upasarjanasya (P. 1.2.48) ity atra gotāṅgraḥanam coditam tan na kartavyam bhavati/ strigraḥanam svarayisyate/ svaritenādhiṅkāragatir bhavatīti striyām (P. 4.1.3) ity evam prakṛtya ye pratyayā viṁśaṃ grahaṇaṃ viṁśaṃ viṁśaṣyate/
(ii) It shows that Kātyāyana, far from wishing to keep the original forms of the sūtras, proposes modifications.

(iii) Patañjali rejects Kātyāyana's modifications, but proposes others, such as the addition of the svarita accent to words that apparently did not yet have them.

Patañjali’s concern was clearly not so much to reestablish Pāṇini’s original text (which he had no reason to think he did not possess), but rather to interpret it in the best possible way, proposing improvements in cases where this might give a purpose to a sūtra that otherwise might seem superfluous. At the same time one has the impression that Patañjali did not wish to deviate too much from Pāṇini’s text. As we have seen, he rejects some of Kātyāyana's proposals, which he no doubt considered going too far. Nor is he ready to suppress P. 1.3.11, this in spite of the fact that he considers it superfluous in its normal interpretation. He prefers to find new and artificial interpretations, whose main virtue is that they leave the text of the Aṣṭādhyāyī almost intact. One has to say ‘almost’, for these new interpretations oblige him to add the svarita accent at places different from where this accent occurred in Pāṇini’s traditional text.

It is well known that Patañjali was hesitant to deviate too much from the inherited text of the Aṣṭādhyāyī, as is his desire to ‘save’ the text by adding ‘improvements’. There are, for example, two passages in the Mahābhāṣya where he rejects proposals made in a vārttika (or similar rule) with the words: sidhyaty evam apāṇinīyam tu bhavati “That works, but it is not Pāṇinian”. In these two passage Patañjali is not ready to follow Kātyāyana’s (or someone else’s) proposal to introduce relatively important changes into Pāṇini’s grammar. Here Patañjali clearly prefers to remain ‘Pāṇinian’ in his proposals and interpretations. But elsewhere he goes further than Kātyāyana. Kielhorn (1876: 51) points out that where Kātyāyana formulates objections against the words didhīvevi in sūtra 1.1.6, Patañjali shows that the whole sūtra is superfluous (Mahā-bh I p. 55 l. 21: ayam yogah śakyo ‘kartum); that where Kātyāyana defends P. 1.1.36 against an objection, Patañjali modifies it; etc.

It is surprising that this same Kielhorn who shows Patañjali’s willingness to deviate from Pāṇini, claims that Patañjali would have felt bound by the svarita accents in the Aṣṭādhyāyī if he had known them. This is why he concludes that svarita accents were no longer part of the text at the time of Patañjali. But we know, and we owe this to Kielhorn among others, that Patañjali regularly proposes modifications to Pāṇini’s text.

These modifications do not only concern the sūtras. Yutaka Ojihara's research has shown that the Mahābhāṣya also proposes improvement elsewhere. According to his calculation, Patañjali proposes 22 modifications in the Ganaṭha. We are entitled to conclude that Patañjali, though confident that he possessed the text of the Aṣṭādhyāyī and its annexes as they had been taught by Pāṇini himself, felt free to propose modifications where he thought this would be useful.

1126 Cp. Deshpande 1998: 19; “Often Patañjali agrees with the substance of Kātyāyana's objections to Pāṇini's wording of a rule, but rejects the need to reword the rule. The clear message is that a reinterpretation is a better choice as compared to a rewording of the rule.”

1127 Kielhorn (1886a: 228 [214]; cp. Joshi & Roodbergen 1986: 204 n. 855) observes that the line lingārthā tu prayāpattih (Mahā-bh I p. 14 l. 4) is a quarter strophe; he seems to conclude from this that it is not a vārttika.

1128 Mahā-bh I p. 14 l. 7-8; p. 39 l. 8-9.

1129 "[C’est] vingt-deux fois au total (dont cinq fois en s’alignant sur Kātyāyana et une fois en commentant un vārttika versifié) que Patañjali propose d’inclure (ou, rarement, de supprimer) tel mot dans la liste de tel groupe" (Ojihara 1968: 565; 1970: 81).
Appendix VIII: Why did Buddhism and Jainism develop differently in India?

Buddhism and Jainism arose in the same region of India, roughly during the same period. Both offered solutions to the same problem: how does one put an end to a potentially endless number of rebirths.\textsuperscript{1131} Both of them put the remains of their founders in stūpas, or so it seems.\textsuperscript{1132} Both preserved similar stories.\textsuperscript{1133} Both exerted a profound influence on one another during the early period. Buddhism incorporated what we may safely consider Jaina practices in its own arsenal of practices at an early stage, even before its Śūtras had attained their classical form.\textsuperscript{1134} Influence the other way round, from Buddhism onto Jainism, becomes visible at a time when Buddhism had elaborated its Sarvāstivāda Abhidharma: a number of its features can be recognized in Śvetāmbara canonical texts.\textsuperscript{1135}

With so many features in common, how do we explain that the developments of Buddhism and Jainism on the Indian subcontinent are so radically different? Indeed, one of the striking differences is that Jainism only developed on the Indian subcontinent, whereas Buddhism developed both there and elsewhere. But this difference does not appear to explain everything. Already on the Indian subcontinent Buddhism developed in a manner quite different from Jainism. I therefore propose to consider some developments of Buddhism and Jainism that took place on the subcontinent, and what is more: in geographical regions that the two religions shared.

This confronts us with an important question. Apart from both being present on the Indian subcontinent, to what extent did Buddhism and Jainism share the same regions? They both began in the same region, to be sure: the region I like to call Greater Magadha. Probably they continued sharing certain regions of the subcontinent, but we know that quite early in their history there were also regions that they did not share. Inscriptions reveal that there was a strong Jaina presence in Tamil Nadu before the beginning of the Common Era, and well before any Buddhists settled there.\textsuperscript{1136} And the Buddhist presence in Gandhāra and surroundings also dates from the centuries preceding the Common Era, perhaps already from the time of Aśoka,\textsuperscript{1137} while there were no Jaina

\textsuperscript{1130} He is not restrained by the fact that Pāṇini’s sūtras are ‘like Vedic texts’ (\textit{chandovat sūtrāni bhavanti}; Mahā-bh I p. 37 l. 4; p. 313 l. 5), this because that comparison is only used to justify certain phonetic features. It is true that Deshpande (1998: 26-27) invokes the quasi-Vedic character of Pāṇini’s sūtras, which are part of the texts recited by \textit{daśagranthi} Brahmins until today, to explain their preservation; this applies even to sūtras that are rejected by the commentators. However, this mechanism has not been able to maintain the \textit{Aṣṭādhyāyī} in its original state during the centuries that separate Patañjali from the Kāśikā.

\textsuperscript{1131} This appendix will not enumerate the numerous differences between Buddhism and Jainism, throughout history. It is however interesting, as pointed out by Naomi Appleton (2011; 2014: 90 ff.), to recall that Jainism, unlike Buddhism, did not, and could not, develop a Jātaka literature, nor, as a result, anything like Jaina Mahāyāna.

\textsuperscript{1132} See below.

\textsuperscript{1133} See Wu 2014.

\textsuperscript{1134} Bronkhorst 1993d; 2009: 44 ff.

\textsuperscript{1135} See below.

\textsuperscript{1136} Mahadevan 2003.

\textsuperscript{1137} See Dietz 2007 and Seldeslachts 2007.
monks there.\footnote{138} This does not, of course, exclude the possibility that there were Jaina merchants in Gandhāra and beyond.\footnote{139}

[Interestingly,\footnote{140} Marshall (1951: I: 145) makes the following observation: “We know from many passages in literature that Taxila was an important centre of Jainism, with numerous monuments of that faith in and around the city, and it can hardly be doubted that some, at any rate, of the stūpas unearthed in Sirkap and the neighbourhood belonged to the Jains, though which particular ones is necessarily conjectural, since no inscriptions or anything else of a definitely Jain character have been found in any of them.” As tentative examples he mentions two small stūpas at Jandīlā that are “either Buddhist or Jaina” (1918: 8; 1951: I: 6), and “a stūpa of the Jains (?) at Sirkap” (1951: I: 140. Marshall becomes more confident in his second volume, where he states (1951: II: 463: “As there are grounds for believing that these two stūpas (i.e., the Bhīr and Sirkap Mounds, JB) were Jaina rather than Buddhist structures, and as none of the tanks has been found at any of the innumerable Buddhist stūpas at Taxila, it is not unreasonable to surmise that they were particularly connected with Jaina ritual.” Marshall does not specify which these grounds are, and has a hard time (postulating religious contamination, and influence from Mohenjo-daro) to justify the link of tanks with Jaina ritual. He does not specify the evidence that makes him think that Taxila was an important centre of Jainism. The Āgamic Index of Prakrit Proper Names (PPN I p. 331 s.v. Takkasilā) says the following about this city: “Capital of the country of Bahalī where Bāhubali reigned. It was visited by Usabha. Bāhubali installed a jewelled dharmacakra on the foot-prints left by Usabha at that place”. It gives references to the Āvaśyaka-cārṇī, the Āvaśyaka-nirukti, the Āvaśyaka-vṛtti by Haribhadra, the Āvaśyaka-vṛtti by Malayagiri, the Kalpasūtra-vṛtti by Śāntisāgara, the Kalpasūtra-vṛtti by Dharmasāgara, the Kalpasūtra-vṛtti by Vinayavijaya, and to the Viśeśāvaśyakabhāṣya. The frequent mention of Takṣaśilā in what are presumably stories does not by itself turn it into “an important centre of Jainism”. The frequent mention of this city in Pāli literature provides a significant parallel: “It is frequently mentioned as a centre of education, especially in the Jātakas. It is \textit{significant that it is never mentioned in the suttas}, though, according to numerous Jātaka stories, it was a great centre of learning from pre-Buddhist times.” (PPN I p. 982 s.v. Takkasilā, emphasis added).]

I do not know — and perhaps it is not at present possible to know — whether and to what extent the early Jainas of Tamil Nadu were involved in activities that left marks on their religion. We are luckier with regard to the Buddhists of Greater Gandhāra. These Buddhists rethought and reworked their heritage and created in so doing something new

\footnote{138} Gandhāra is beyond the lands where a Jaina monk is allowed to travel, even after the extension created by King Samprati; see Jain 1984: 23-24 (with note 2), 337 ff.; further PPN II s.v. Sampai (Samprati), with references. Kalpasūtra 1.50 reads: “monks and nuns may wander eastward as far as Anga-Magadha, southward as far as Kosambī, westward as far as Thūṇā and northward as far as Kunālā. They may wander thus far, (for) thus far there are Āryan countries, but not beyond unless the Dhamma flourishes there” (tr. Bollée 1998: xxiv). According to PPN I s.v. Thūṇā (Śthūṇā), this place is identified with Thaneswar. On the absence of Brahmins in Gandhāra during this period, see § 1.1.3, above.

\footnote{139} Gail (1994) points out that there is a possible depiction of an Ardhaāpālaka Jaina monk on a relief from Gandhāra. According to Pal (2007), “the material evidence from Afghanistan and the evidence from a Jain literary source ... do at least demonstrate that Jain merchants from India did venture forth beyond the Khyber Pass” (p. 32).

\footnote{140} I thank Peter Flügel for helping me in writing this paragraph.
altogether: a systematized philosophical ontology that came to be known as Sarvāstivāda Abhidharma, even though we cannot be sure that the Sarvāstivādins invented it. But whoever invented it, once it was there, it was going to have a determining influence on the future development of Buddhism all over India.\textsuperscript{1141}

Sarvāstivāda Abhidharma influenced certain Śvetāmbara canonical texts.\textsuperscript{1142} Already the Sīryagāda, or Sūtrakṛtānga, is aware of the developments that had taken place (or were taking place) in Sarvāstivāda Abhidharma, some of which are silently taken over, usually with appropriate modifications, in more recent texts of the canon. This suggests that the Jaina composers of these texts were already acquainted with these developments in Buddhism at a relatively early date. It further suggests that there was at that time a rather intensive interaction between Buddhists and Jainas. Since there were apparently no Jainas in Greater Gandhāra, one would like to know where in India — preferably not too far from Gandhāra — Buddhists and Jainas rubbed shoulders during, say, the early centuries of the Common Era. The answer that presents itself is: Mathurā under the Kuṣāṇas.\textsuperscript{1143} We know that there was a strong presence of Jainas in Mathurā at that time,\textsuperscript{1144} but also of Buddhists. Moreover, Mathurā and Gandhāra were two centres — perhaps the two main centres — of Kuṣāṇa power in India, so that it seems plausible that Buddhist ideas from Gandhāra also came to be discussed in Mathurā. Mathurā, it appears, was not only a place that brought Buddhists and Jainas together (again), but also a place where some crucial events took place that sent Buddhism and Jainism henceforth into different directions (figuratively speaking).

Consider first a new shared feature that Buddhism and Jainism appear to have developed in or around Mathurā. Both preserve the legend of a rival to their respective founders. In Buddhism he is called Devadatta, in Jainism Gosāla Maṅkhaliputta. The story of Devadatta has been preserved in various sources, mainly Vinaya texts;\textsuperscript{1145} Gosāla Maṅkhaliputta is primarily dealt with in the Jaina Viyāhappannatti chapter 15.\textsuperscript{1146} In the case of Devadatta, the source material allows us to make a more or less plausible reconstruction of the development of the legend. In the case of Gosāla Maṅkhaliputta we have little beyond the final version as we find it in the Viyāhappannatti.\textsuperscript{1147}

In spite of the differences, the two legends have a surprising number of features in common. Both Devadatta and Gosāla Maṅkhaliputta begin their career as pupils of their respective teachers: Devadatta is accepted as a monk by the Buddha, Gosāla is accepted, be it only after repeated attempts, by Mahāvīra as his disciple. Both Devadatta and Gosāla subsequently distinguish themselves by their magical powers. Both make a bid for the supreme position in their respective communities. Both try to harm their respective teachers in various ways, and seem to come close to succeeding, but are ultimately

\textsuperscript{1141} See § III.2.1 and § III.3, above.
\textsuperscript{1142} Bronkhorst 2000.
\textsuperscript{1143} On the importance of Mathurā as a centre of Brahmanism, Buddhism and Jainism, see the chapter "Why Mathurā?" by Srinivasan (1997: 305-324).
\textsuperscript{1144} Ohira (1982: 43-44) suggests, on the basis of the similarity between lists of teachers in inscriptions from Mathurā and in the Kalpasūtra and of the fact that many names in the Kalpasūtra are derived from place names from all over North India, “that the Jainas at Mathurā had come from all these places, attesting that Mathurā likely became the centre of the Jainas by the 2\textsuperscript{nd} century A.D. in the North”.
\textsuperscript{1145} For Devadatta as presented in the Ekottarika Āgama, see Legittimo 2012: 357-360.
\textsuperscript{1146} Cf. Deleu 1970: 214 ff.
\textsuperscript{1147} Jinadāsa’s cārṇī to the Āvaśyaka Sūtra adds further material; see Basham 1951: 41 ff.
incapable of inflicting more than superficial harm onto them. Both come to a grievous end as a result. To the preceding we must add a final and very important feature: Both leave communities of followers whose existence, centuries after the presumed events and even after the composition of the texts that relate the legends, seems confirmed by independent testimony.1148

Neither of the two legends in the form here presented is particularly old. Both were created at some point in time, and it is not difficult to see why. Both criticize a religious group that was presumably too close for comfort. The followers of Devadatta were essentially Buddhists who criticized the comfortable forms of monastic life that had developed. The followers of Gosāla were the Ājīvakas, about whom we know a certain amount from Buddhist and Jaina sources; the Ājīvakas held views that were close to those of the Jainas, yet different in some essential points.1149

As stated above, the development of the story of Devadatta can be retraced.1150 This has been done most convincingly by André Bareau (1989; 1991; 1997), whose reconstruction shows that the most striking points of similarity between Devadatta and Gosāla occur in the most recent part of the story of Devadatta, found in the Vinaya texts of various schools. It is not necessary to repeat Bareau’s analysis of the pertinent Vinaya passages. It allows him to propose three developmental phases in the legend of Devadatta:
1) The earliest phase merely presents the first schism and does not even mention Devadatta.
2) In the second phase this schism becomes associated with the name of Devadatta, who is however not yet depicted as a fundamentally evil person.
3) This changes in the third phase, where Devadatta carries out all the evil deeds mentioned above. It is in this third phase that the parallels we noticed with the story of Gosāla Manikhaliṣapatā become part of his legend.

It is probably impossible to determine with certainty when the third phase of the legend was added. The similarities between the different versions of the legend in the

1148 See Deeg 2005: 316 ff. Faxian apparently met followers of Devadatta during the early years of the fifth century: “There are also companies of the followers of Devadatta still existing. They regularly make offerings to the three previous Buddhas, but not to Śākyamuni Buddha.” (Legge 1886: 62; cp. Deeg 2005: 540). For Yijing’s remarks on the followers of Devadatta, see Deeg 1999: 188 ff. Xuanzang, writing almost two and a half centuries after Faxian, still states, with regard to a region in Bengal: “There were also three Buddhist monasteries in which in accordance with the teaching of Devadatta milk products were not taken as food.” (Watters 1905: II: 191; cp. Beal 1884: II: 201; Li 1996: 303). Watters comments (p. 192): “With reference to the Brethren who abstained from the use of milk, curds, and as articles of food our pilgrim’s statement that they did so as followers of Devadatta may have been the suggestion of a Mahāyānist Brother. All Mahāyānists were supposed to abstain from milk food, and I-ching states expressly that it is unlawful food.” (reference to Takakusu 1896: 43: “We may regard milk, cream, &c., as besides the two groups of the five mentioned above; for they have no special name given in theVinaya, and it is clear that they are not included in the proper food.”) Does this mean that there were perhaps no followers in the strict sense of Devadatta left at the time of Xuanzang?
1149 Bronkhorst 2003a; 2013a. Balcerowicz (2015, chapters 5 and 6) discusses Ājīvika scriptures (Abhayadeva-sūri calls them śāstra). Also a passage in the Vajrasūcī attributed to Asvaghosa (ed. Mukhopadhyaya, p. 412.2-4; cited in Eltschinger forthcoming: ḍrṣyante ca kvacic chidrā api vedavyākaranamimāṃsāśānāhavaiśeṣikanājīvikaśāravāsāstrāhridvidah) confirms that the Ājīvikas had Śāstras.
texts of different Buddhist schools allow us to conclude that the legend spread quickly over the subcontinent and perhaps beyond, and reached all the schools whose Vinaya texts have survived.\textsuperscript{1151} The popularity of the tale in its expanded version, and the virulence with which it attacks Devadatta, may yet give an indication as to the period in which it came about.

Devadatta is stated to have upheld a number of points, all of them aiming at imposing a severe ascetic lifestyle on the monastics, and all of them favouring life in the forest. His criticism of settled monastic life was threatening, especially at the time when settled monasticism had become a feature of Buddhism. This did not happen at the time of the Buddha, and apparently not until well after Emperor Aśoka. It happened during “the Middle Period of Indian Buddhism, the period between the beginning of the Common Era and the year 500 C.E. … [T]his was the period during which the various named monastic orders — the Sarvāstivādins, Mahāsāṃghikas, Dharma-guptakas, and so on — appeared in Indian inscriptions as the recipients of what must have been an enormous amount of surplus wealth.”\textsuperscript{1152} We know that, once settled monasticism was in place, settled monks tended to be very critical of forest ascetics.\textsuperscript{1153} We may assume that the name Devadatta came to stand for all that the monks (and nuns) in their monasteries detested: living in the forest, severe asceticism, etc. This does not mean that the schism associated with Devadatta’s name must have taken place during this Middle Period. It merely means that the third phase of the legend was probably added during this period. An additional reason may well be that, as Deeg (2005: 316 ff.) argues, the sect of Devadatta may have been created late, perhaps as late as the Guptas. Elsewhere Deeg (1999: 194 [219]) suggests “that such a group had developed in the time of the Kuśāṇa-empire”.

The preceding reflections can be amplified with Deeg’s (1999: 194-195 [219-218]) thoughts about the matter: “A really existing saṅgha of Devadatta, institutionalizing itself with the help of the old Devadatta-legend in the Vinaya, would then have had an impact on … the [more recent] Devadatta-legend …”

It is this third phase of the legend that resembles the story of Gosāla Maṅkhaliputta. Is it possible that the two legends somehow influenced each other? that one of the two was created under the influence of the other? or that both somehow arose more or less simultaneously, each being so to say an adjusted version of basically the same underlying story?

In order to answer these questions, we have to look more closely at Jainism during the ‘Middle Period’ introduced above. During this period Buddhism underwent major changes, receiving the quantity of surplus wealth that resulted in a form of monasticism very different from forest life and severe asceticism. The centres of political power were

\textsuperscript{1151} Cf. Schopen 2012: 596 [120]: “[Those] who might think — like the still pertinent Vasilyev — that all the Vinayas as we have them are late, might want to suggest that such shared material could have resulted from a long process of leveling and cross-contamination carried forward by the continual itinerancy of a good part of the South Asian Buddhist monastic population.”

\textsuperscript{1152} Schopen 2004: 94-95.

\textsuperscript{1153} See, e.g., Schopen 2004: 26 f.; 2005: 15 f.; 82 f. Interestingly, presumably during the same period and in the same region, the ‘Prophecy of Kauśāmibi’ emerges, according to which the end of the Dharma is brought about by “the munificence of a well intentioned Buddhist king”; Nattier 1991: 227. Eltschinger (2012: 65) proposes the following explanation: “the ‘Prophecy of Kauśāmibi’ perhaps mirrors the worries aroused in a disciplinary conservative fraction of northwestern Buddhist communities by the saṅgha’s laxity under Kushana rule.”
one of the sources of this surplus wealth. Buddhism in northern India succeeded at that
time in establishing very profitable links with those centres. From its side, Buddhism
made various adjustments, too, some of which have been studied in *Buddhism in the
Shadow of Brahmanism*. One of these adjustments may here be mentioned: Buddhism
‘brahmanized’ itself to a considerable extent, up to the point of adopting Sanskrit as its
language. This happened during the very first centuries of the Common Era, presumably
under the rule of the Kuśāṇas. Jainism, on the other hand, did not undergo these same
changes. It did not turn to Sanskrit at that time, did not receive state patronage, did not
obtain land grants, and its monks basically remained wanderers. It is therefore not
immediately clear why the Jainas of that period needed to attack the founder of Ajivikism
through the intermediary of such a legend. We are not even sure that there were Ājīvikas
in the Kuśāṇa Empire. As noted above, there was a relatively strong interaction, and
presumably competition, between Buddhists and Jainas under the Kuśāṇas, especially in
and around the city of Mathurā. It is tempting to consider that the local Jainas,
influenced by the newly expanded Buddhist story of Devadatta, used vague memories of
the founder of Ajivikism — the ancient Buddhist texts call him Makkali Gosāla — and a
more or less superficial acquaintance with existing Ājīvikas, to invent an arch-enemy for
Mahāvīra as well. This is and can be no more than a guess, but a guess that may make the
presence of two parallel, but relatively late, stories in Buddhist and Jaina literature
intelligible.

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1154 The non-adoption of Sanskrit by the Jainas of that period is all the more remarkable in that
Indian inscription dating from the second to the fourth century CE and found on the island of
Socotra, hundreds of miles west of India and near the Arab peninsula, written by sailors and
merchants from Western India, were mainly in Sanskrit (Strauch 2012: 261 f., 341 f.) This
suggests that Sanskrit was adopted rather widely at that time, and that Jainism consciously
resisted this transformation. Note in this connection the expression *catuvarna samgha* in a Jaina
inscription from Mathurā (Lüders 1910: 12 no. 57), apparently to refer to “the community of the
eight orders, consisting of the monks, the nuns, and the lay-followers, male and female” (Sharma
2001: 153). No need to point out that the four *varnas* are, primarily, the four Brahmanical caste-
classes. According to Das (1980: 111), this is “an inscription of the Kuśāṇa period dated in the
year 62 of the Kaniṣka or Śāka era”. It would seem that Jainism here gives a Jaina interpretation
to a Brahmanical concept.

1155 *Buddhism in the Shadow of Brahmanism* p. 138 f. See also below. The Jainas were yet popular;
as Ohira (1994a: 481 n. 33) points out: “Out of 159 Mathura inscriptions of this period [i.e. the
Kuśāṇa period, during the reigns of King Kaniṣka and King Vāsudeva] listed in Lüder’s *List of
Brahmi Inscriptions*, 87 belong to the Jainas, 55 to the Buddhists and 17 to the non-sectarians …”
The much more recent Jaina caves at Ellora “seem to have been sustained and expanded primarily
through the efforts of those who worshipped there” (Owen 2012: 163).

1156 See however Bronkhorst 2013a. Basham (1951: 165), on the basis of a “puzzling reference in
the *Vāyu Purāṇa*”, thinks “that there survived in North India in Gupta times an Ājīvika
community, which had by now become corrupt and was probably rapidly declining”. Qvarnström
(2015: 53) states: “The very existence of the *Niyatidvātrimsākā* possibly indicates that during the
sixth century CE the Ājīvikas were still engaged in polemics with Jainas and Buddhists, and that
the philosophical discourse was conducted in the Sanskrit idiom.”

1157 *Buddhism in the Shadow of Brahmanism* p. 130 ff. (“Jainism, Mathurā and Sanskrit”).

1158 Balcerowicz (2015) argues that the story of Gosāla as we find it in the *Viyāhapaṇṇattī* "must
belong to earlier literary layers of what ultimately became the Jaina canon", but this is not
necessarily in conflict with our suggestion that it dates from the time of the Kuśāṇa Empire.
This short excursus into the stories of Devadatta and Gosāla Maṅkhaliputta made it necessary to draw attention to some differences, beside similarities, between Buddhists and Jainas at the time of the Kuṣāṇas. While Buddhist monks and nuns had settled in monasteries, Jaina monks remained wanderers. This difference may be connected to another difference that appears to become important in those days. Whereas Buddhism concentrated its cultic life on the veneration of stūpas, Jainism largely abandoned the worship of stūpas at or around that time. It is tempting to think that this development was linked to the increasing importance of monasteries in Buddhism, and their absence in Jainism. Buddhist stūpas were often built in the immediate vicinity of monasteries, and some of the tasks of the monks were associated with those stūpas. The absence of Jaina monasteries implied that the stūpas of Jainism could easily become victims of neglect. Moreover, it left Jainism with two altogether different and unconnected objects of veneration: on one hand its renouncers, i.e. its monks and nuns, and on the other stūpas containing relics of former saints.

Let us look more closely into this matter. To begin with, Buddhist stūpas and monastic establishments are often found together. To cite Schopen (2005: 350):

> Perhaps the most characteristic element of Buddhist sites in India is the presence of a stūpa, which is — where topography allows — the fixed focal point of the entire complex. There are, in fact, literary sources that declare that the stūpa was to be the first element established and that its position should determine the position of all monastic residential quarters. A glance at the site plans of almost any moderately well-preserved or studied monastic complex in India will show how frequently this pattern — again, when topography allows — holds.

Second, the Jainas had no monastic establishments under the Kuṣāṇas. Scholars make much of the word vihāra in a Jaina inscription in Mathurā, but probably without

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1159 And competition. “The Jaina texts do speak of tussles between the Buddhists and the Jaina over the ownership of the stūpa at Mathura.” (Sahgal 1994: 229, with a reference to Vyawahārasūtra Bhāṣya, 5, 2728). “We learn from the Jaina tradition recorded in Vyawahārasūtra Bhāṣya, Brhat-Kathākosa of Haraś[ṇa], Yaśastilacakṣupū of Somadeva, and Vividha-Tirthakalpa of Jina-prabha Sūrī that the Buddhists entered into a dispute with the Jainas for the possession of the stūpa at Kankālī Tilā. The controversy regarding the ownership of this stūpa raged for about six months, but the issue was decided in favour of the Jainas by the king.” (V. K. Sharma 2001: 140, with a reference to V. S. Agrawala, Studies in Indian Art, 1965, p. 167). For further details, see Shah & Bender 1987: 88-89 [210-211]; also Bühler 1898.

1160 Note however: “South Asia is dotted with numerous funerary cenotaphs for Jaina mendicants. These memorials are often relic stūpas. They generally mark the sites of cremation, rather than death, of renowned historical individuals, often monks or nuns who died a special death through self-starvation, or sallékhanā.” (Flügel 2013: 24).

1161 In a footnote Schopen refers to Bareau 1962: 234.

1162 About this issue, different scholars hold different opinions. In a private discussion, Monika Zin and Patrick Krüger raise the issue how a wandering monk can possess the numerous (25) items that the scriptures allow him (Schubring 2000: §§ 142-146): for so many items one presumably needs a monastery. In my understanding there are here too many interpretational and chronological questions to consider this argument clinching.

1163 See, e.g., the following: “Unlike the Buddhists, the Jainas still did not acquire any land base. Jaina monks basically remained wanderers. We do get references to Jaina Vihāras at Mathura … but not many evidences come [our] way.” (Sahgal 1994: 226). “One of the fragmentary āyāga-
justification. *Vihāra* in early Jainism does not mean ‘monastery’, but rather ‘roaming’ (Shatavadhani & Ratnachandra 1923: IV: 476-477), ‘itinerary’ (Tatia & Kumar 1981: 41, 45 ff.; see also Sheth 1928: 811). What is more, this one occurrence of *vihāra* is found in the following, ‘badly defaced’ and partly reconstructed, line: … *vihāre koliyāto ganāto thānikiyāto kula(to) … sa(khāto) …* (Quintanilla 2000: 123). Quintanilla translates “… in the living quarters of the Koliya gana, Thānikiya kula, and the … *ṣakha*…”. It is yet difficult to accept that this single fragment, containing the word *vihāra* which does not normally mean ‘monastery’ in Jainism, is a reliable basis for conclusions about the existence of Jaina monasteries at that time. The word *vihāra* is of course common in non-Jaina, esp. Buddhist, inscriptions from Mathurā, where it does appear to refer to monasteries.

*pattas*, presently in the collection of Government Museum, Mathurā, contains the word *vihāra*. It is certain that *vihāras* (monasteries), too, were built for the residence of the Jaina monks.” (V. K. Sharma 2001: 143, with reference to Mitra 1974: 52 (“The word *vihāra* occurs on a fragmentary *āyāga-patta*”) & 62 (“There were no doubt *vihāras* as well for the residence of the Jaina monks. It is, however, not possible to reconstruct these structures from the available evidence.”)). “It appears certain that *vihāras*, i.e., monasteries for the residence of Jaina monks, were also built at Mathurā. This is evident from the word *vihāra* which occurs on a fragmentary *āyāga-patta* discovered at Mathurā.” (Sharma 2001: 220, with a reference, here too, to Mitra 1974: 52 & 62). “The fragmentary Koliya Gana *āyāgapata* inscription mentions the *vihāra*, or ‘monastic quarters’, of the specific branch of Jaina monks in the locative case … This inscription suggests that the plaque was found in a Jaina monastic complex, which, as we know from the intact western Indian cave temples, could include small shrines with sacred objects or images.” (Quintanilla 2007: 100).

1164 Jacobi (1884: 90) translates the word *vihārabhūmi* in *Āyāranga Sutta* 2.1.1.8 as ‘out-of-door place for study’; he follows in this respect Śīlāṅka (*svādhīyabhūmi*). See further Mette 2010: 214-215: “Anders als die Buddhisten entwickelten die Jaina bis in die jüngste Zeit keine klösterlichen Einrichtungen (*vihāra*), sondern sie blieben umherziehende Wandermönche (*vihārin*, entsprechend der eigentlichen Bedeutung des Wortes).” Even in Buddhism *vihāra* never lost its meanings ‘walking or touring for pleasure’, ‘sport, play, pastime, or diversion’, ‘a place of recreation, pleasure ground’, beside ‘monastery’; Aśoka uses the term only in the first of these meanings. See Schopen 2006. An early (perhaps the earliest?) inscription where the word *vihāra* seems to refer to a Jaina monastic establishment is the Paharpur copper-plate inscription from 479 CE (Dikshit 1933). Beckwith (2012: 41, with references to Dutt 1962: 62 ff., 211 ff.) states that “the plan of the *vihāra* is strikingly different from that of the *saṅghārāma*, the typical earlier, strictly Indian, Buddhist monastic design” and that the earliest examples of *vihāras* date to the period of the Kushan Empire, being “a specifically Central Asian innovation developed under the Kushans and spread by them”. These claims, and especially the second one, are not substantiated but cannot here be further examined; see however Schopen 2004: 73-80; 2006.

1165 Shimada (2013: 166 f.) draws attention to the fact that “kings preferred to show royal support of Buddhism through *vihāra*-s rather than the *stūpa*-s”. Well, Jainism during this period did not receive, or did not wish to receive, royal support (see below). This may have contributed to the absence of Jaina *vihāras*. Other cultic structures, on the other hand, were present in Mathurā: “Jain cultic structures at Mathura included at least one temple, several shrines, and a *stūpa*. One temple (*pāsāda*) is mentioned in an inscription of the mid-second century B.C.E. and another in an inscription from just before the time of Kaniska. Other inscriptions mention Arhat shrines (*devakula*) and Arhat sanctuaries (*āyatana*).” (Cort 2002: 68, with references to N. P. Joshi 1989: 332; Mitra 1974: 51-52; Lüders 1912: inscriptions 78, 93, 99 and 102).

1166 See, e.g., the index in Lüders 1961: 232 s.v. *vihāre*. For the use of *vihāra* in Indian Buddhism in general, see Durt 1983.
Temple dwelling became an issue in Jainism, but only at a more recent period, it seems. Dundas says the following about it (2002: 136):

By Śvetāmbara reckoning, the temple-dwelling monks appeared in about the fourth century CE,⁷ but it is impossible to trace their early history beyond the odd reference such as that to a king of Pātan who banned non-temple-dwelling monks from his city.⁸

And again (1988: 190-191):

A particularly pertinent Jain example [of the loosening of laws of monastic behaviour] can be found in the verse-commentary (bhāsyā) (third-fourth cent. A.D.) on the highly authoritative Niśīthasūtra, ‘the emissary from the city of nirvāṇa’, where several reasons are given why a monk might be permitted to cease from the normative, wandering life and live permanently (nicca) in one place:

“when there is inauspiciousness, when there is famine (omoyariya), when there is great danger due to oppression by a king, in illness and when there is lack of correct behaviour and study”.

According to Jinadāśa’s (seventh cent.) prose commentary (cūrṇī) on Niśīthabhāṣya 1024, there is no sin in living somewhere on a permanent basis in order to increase qualities such as knowledge. If leading the wandering life in the wide world (bahiḥ) causes decrease of knowledge, then one should avoid it. While elsewhere (verse 1016) the Niśīthabhāṣya is more guarded, pointing out that nicca need not always mean ‘permanent’, this relaxation of the rules about monastic lodging in such an authoritative text, though doubtless made with the best intentions, must have provided ample justification for the defence of the institution of temple-dwelling …

Dundas (1988: 182-183) further points out that the members of the Kharatara Gaccha, whose origins can be located in the eleventh century CE, tried to replicate the jinakalpa, the mode of life followed long ago by the tīrthānakaras and their disciples, in designating themselves as ‘forest-dwelling’. This “served to differentiate them from the caityavāsin monks who lived a permanent and sedentary life in temples (caitya) or monasteries (matha), which were part of temple complexes and had been built specially for them, ignoring the scriptural injunctions about the wandering life and the temporary lodging (vasai) appropriate to it, failing to observe correct rules for alms-begging and avoidance of injury to life-forms, and appropriating temple funds and property for their own uses, including the staging of rituals in a conspicuously Hindu idiom.”

Stories confirm that Jaina monastics endured, voluntarily, more hardships than their Buddhist colleagues. Consider the following passage from an article by Phyllis Granoff (1994: 259):

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⁷ In a note Dundas refers to Jain 1963: 88-91 and Jhavery 1944: 178-179. V. K. Sharma (2001: 151, with references to Lüders 1910: 18-19 no. 102 and B. N. Puri, India under the Kusānas, Bombay, 1965, p. 149) states, with regard to the Kusāna period: “The Jaina temples were probably residences of the ascetics also”; one is entitled to remain sceptical.

⁸ Dundas refers to Prabhācandra’s Prabhāvakacarita (ed. Jinavijaya, Ahmedabad / Calcutta 1940), 19.71-76.
It is a common theme of Jain stories that Jains may be wrongly duped into becoming Buddhists, particularly because they are attracted to the lush life in a Buddhist monastery compared to the severity of life as a Jain monk. Thus in a biography of the Jain monk Ārya Khapatācārya we hear of the master’s nephew, Bhuṣuṇa, who becomes a Buddhist and magically causes wonderful food to appear in the begging bowls of the Buddhist monks. The Jains lose many of their faithful, who are enticed by the promise of such rich delights.1169

Buddhists countered these Jain stories with their own stories in which they justified the Buddhist monastic practices and criticized the strict regimen of the Jain ascetic. One very telling story is the Vītāśokāvadāna that occurs in the Divyāvadāna.1170 Vītāśoka, the brother of the famous king Aśoka, is persuaded by the harsh asceticism of the Jain monks that they must be the true ascetics and not the Buddhist monks who live a life of relative ease and comfort. Aśoka devises a stratagem to make him realize his mistake; he has him sentenced to death and then allows him the pleasures of being king for seven days before the sentence is to be carried out. Vītāśoka does not take pleasure in his week as king, for he becomes obsessed with his death sentence. King Aśoka finally tells him that all has been a ruse, to show him that although the Buddhist monks may live a life of comfort, they find no pleasure in that life for they are ever occupied with the thought that death pursues all mortals.

There are indications showing that Jainism once had its stūpas.1171 But it appears that these stūpas stopped playing a central role in Jaina religious life. Indeed, a late Švetāmbara canonical text, the Jambudīvapannatti, contains an insertion according to which the bodily remains of the tīrthaṅkaras were taken away by the gods. This story, as I said elsewhere, pulled away the rug from underneath all forms of relic worship related to the tīrthaṅkaras.1172

Let us now combine these elements. Jaina stūpas tended to be neglected because the ascetic community was not organized to look after them. The state of the Buddhist monastic community was altogether different, and this allowed stūpas to play a central role among monastics and lay people alike. In regions where Buddhism and Jainism coexisted, this led to an almost exclusive identification of stūpas with Buddhism, at the expense of Jainism. The Jaina community took note, and abandoned stūpa worship, wholly or largely, consecrating in a way their new position by including in their canon the story according to which there are no bodily relics of tīrthaṅkaras on earth.1173

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1169 Reference to Granoff 1990: 153-156.
1170 Divy(V) pp. 272-278, story number 28.
1172 Buddhism in the Shadow of Brahmanism p. 132-133, with references to further literature.
1173 Johnson (2003: 224) draws attention to the competition from the side of images: “It seems … to me … that whatever emotional satisfaction and ritual effectiveness there may have been in stūpa worship, another form — one which historically overlaps with the stūpa — the Jina image, is destined to supersede it, simply because it has the evolutionary advantage of ambiguity. An ambiguous image is an advantage because it leaves room for the experience of real presence.
The abandonment of stūpa worship, seen this way, is indirectly the result of the more severe lifestyle of Jaina monks and nuns compared with their Buddhist colleagues.\textsuperscript{1174} Recall in this context that the freedom of movement of Jaina monks and nuns was more restricted: they were not allowed to venture beyond a number of circumscribed regions.\textsuperscript{1173} This limitation may have had its effect on the spread of Jainism, and it is perhaps not surprising that Jainism remained largely confined to the Indian subcontinent.

A further point requires attention. North Indian Jainism during the period we are considering did not receive royal support, and may not have wished to receive it.\textsuperscript{1176} Jaina ascetics depended on their lay followers, perhaps exclusively so. This would explain that Jainism appears to have cultivated its lay people far more than Buddhism ever did. P. S. Jaini (1980: 84 [144]), having drawn attention to the relative neglect of lay people in Buddhism, presents some numbers: “The Jainas … eventually produced some fifty texts on conduct proper to a Jaina lay person (śrāvakācāra), while the Buddhists, as far as we know, managed only one (and that not until the eleventh century).”\textsuperscript{1177} There is already a Śvetāmbara canonical text, the Uvāsaga-dasāo (Skt. Upāsaka-ḍaśāḥ), dealing with the duties of lay people.\textsuperscript{1178} We may wonder whether Jainism abandoned its stūpa cult also for financial reasons: It could not compete with Buddhism in this respect because, unlike Buddhism, it did not receive royal support.

Jainism may have undergone other changes during the period just considered. Ohira (1994a) has argued that the tradition of twenty-four tīrthaṅkaras (of which Mahāvīra was the last) was created in Mathurā at that time. The parallelism with the tradition of twenty-four Buddhas in Buddhism does indeed suggest that these two traditions are not independent of each other, and that Jainism and Buddhism coexisted when this notion passed from Buddhism to Jainism (so Ohira) or vice-versa (so Gombrich 1980: 64); i.e., in Mathurā under the Kuśānas.

What happened after the Kuśāna period? Ohira (1994a: 481) makes the following observation.\textsuperscript{1179} “At the beginning of the Gupta age … the number of the Jaina inscriptions and archaeological remains [in Mathurā] suddenly decreases, and the number of those in south India centering around Mysore increases. There are hardly any Jaina

\textsuperscript{1174} Appleton points out in several publications (e.g. 2011) that Buddhist and Jaina narrative literature differ in the different emphasis put on devotion to the Buddha and asceticism respectively.
\textsuperscript{1175} See above.
\textsuperscript{1176} See Buddhism in the Shadow of Brahmanism p.137 ff. (with references) for details.
\textsuperscript{1177} See, however, Heim 2004: 24: “scholars have perhaps somewhat overstated the contrast between Jains and Buddhists on this point, in suggesting that the Buddhists produced only one work, the Upāsakajanālankāra, that might be similar to the vast literary output of the Jains systematizing the rules of lay moral practice … . As I demonstrate here, there are in fact a number of works either devoted entirely to lay conduct or which give significant treatment to it, which simply have not attracted much modern scholarly notice.” On the then following pages (and on p. 151 note 33), Heim presents some Buddhist texts dealing with lay practice. See also Shih 1994, a translation of the Upāsakaśīla-sūtra.
\textsuperscript{1178} See Norman 1991; further Williams 1963.
remains in south India between the beginning of the Christian era and the Gupta period …, but they suddenly begin to appear at the beginning of the Gupta age, and their number continues to grow. Since then south India and west India have become the two centres of the Jainas.” Ohira proposes the following explanation: “The strange phenomenon of this archaeological evidence seems to suggest that some friction must have occurred between the Jainas (along with the Buddhists) and the Vaishnavas during the Kuṣāṇa and Gupta periods under the Vaishnava renaissance movement of Sanskrit culture at Mathura, the birth-place of Kuśaṇa, and this led to mass exodus of the Jainas from Mathura to the South and West, which later caused the Great Schism of the Jainas into the Śvetāmbaras and Digamaras.”

We cannot here deal with this proposition in detail. It seems conceivable that crucial developments in Jainism took place roughly during the period of the Kuṣāṇas, and in the region of Mathurā. From there, modified Jainism may have spread to other regions of India. This, if true, would explain that post-Kuṣāṇa Jainism — i.e., the Jainism that we know from its scriptures and most other manifestations — is in a number of crucial respects different from the earlier form of Jainism that reveals itself (but only with the greatest resistance) through some archaeological and philological remains.

[The preceding pages suggest that Jainism — or at least the North Indian Jainas of roughly the Kuṣāṇa period and after — consciously abandoned the worship of stūpas. An interesting parallel to this (or at least an attempted parallel) may have taken place in Theravāda Buddhism, if the proposal made by Gregory Schopen in his article “The stūpa cult and the external Pāli Vinaya” is correct. Schopen suggests here that rules regarding stūpas may have been systematically removed from the Pāli Vinaya (which in this respect is different from the other surviving Vinayas). He does not claim to know why or even when exactly this may have happened, but his arguments make it likely that it happened. This parallel case of what may have been another attempt to remove stūpa worship, this time from the lives of Buddhist monks and nuns, may add to the questions attached to the abandonment of this practice in Jainism. Alternatively, these parallel cases may ask for parallel, perhaps even identical explanations. What these explanations might be, I do not know. Future research may shed light on these matters.]

Appendix IX: Bhāskara's acquaintance with grammatical literature

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1180 Note in this connection André Couture’s (2015: 86) remark: “Pressed to suggest a likely date for the composition of the version of the [Harivamśa] found in the Critical Edition, the Kuṣāṇa era would appear to be the most plausible choice …”.

1181 Schubring (2000: 50) concludes from the nakedness of sculptured figures at Mathura “that the schism of the Order into Śvetāmbara and Digambara dates from as early as the 2nd century A.D.” This conclusion may have to be looked upon with great caution. See further Jaini 1995.

1182 The question why Jainism survived in India whereas Buddhism did not does not fall within the scope of this appendix. For some thought about this issue, see Verardi 2011a: 338 ff.


Pāṇini’s grammar was studied by all or almost all classical Brahmanical scholars in whatever disciplines, as well as by others (such as Buddhist and Jaina scholars). Bhāskara’s commentary, too, contains ample signs that its author was thoroughly acquainted with it (even though his text, in its edited form, contains a number of grammatical infelicities). The fourth appendix to K. S. Shukla's edition of the text enumerates eight quotations from Pāṇini’s Aṣṭādhyāyī, one from its Dhātupātha, ten from Patañjali’s Mahābhāṣya, one from Bhratṛhari’s Vākyapadīya, and one passage referring to the list of sounds that precedes Pāṇini’s grammar (the ‘Śivasūtras’). This enumeration is far from complete. A quotation from the Mahābhāṣya that has not been identified by the editor is the line sāmānyacodanāś ca viṣeṣe ’vatiṣṭhante (p. 39 l. 23; p. 55 l. 12-13), which is cited from the Mahābhāṣya on P. 4.1.92 vt. 3. Other quotations that could be added are the following. The comparison yathā ‘kniti ca’ ity atra luptanirṛśto gakārah (p. 9 l. 18-19) refers, without saying so, to a discussion in the Mahābhāṣya on P. 3.2.139. The line yaś ca sarvaś ciram jīvati sa varṣaśatam jīvati (p. 13 l. 16) echoes a line from the Paspāśānika; drṣṭānvidhitivāc chandasāḥ (p. 14 l. 22) is part of P. 1.1.6 vt. 1; inīgtena ceṣṭitena nimiṣitena mahatā vā śūtraprabandhena [ca] ācārāṇām abhirāṇya gamyate (p. 34 l. 16-17) is quoted from the Mahābhāṣya on P. 6.1.37; tāṭsthyaḥ tāṭchabdayam (not cchabdayam; p. 35 l. 10) occurs on P. 5.4.50 vt. 3. Particularly interesting is the line antiyāḥ samāsāntavidhīḥ (p. 23 l. 22); this reflects a position taken in the Mahābhāṣya on P. 6.2.197 (III p. 140 l. 6: vibhāṣā samāsānto bhavati) but is identical in form with a grammatical paribhāṣā which we find, perhaps for the first time, in Vyādi’s Paribhāśāvṛtti (no. 69: samāsāntavidhīr antiyāḥ; Wujastyk 1993: I: 70). Equally interesting is Bhāskara’s use of the grammatical expression sambandhalakuśānā ṣaṣṭhī (p. 38 l. 2), which does not seem to occur in the Mahābhāṣya, but which is attested in the Kāśikāvṛtti (p. 7.1.90). The editor has furthermore not identified a i u n r l (p. 18 l. 16), which is ‘Śivasūtra’ 1 & 2. To this must be added that there are many implied references to śūtras of Pāṇini. One occurs on p. 60 l. 8-9 of the edition, where the correct reading must be anyapadārthena (rather than anyapādārthena) samaparināhāsabdena kṣetraḥbhidhīnāh, which means: ‘because the expression samaparināhā — [being a bahuvrīhi compound and therefore] referring to something else [on account of P. 2.2.24: anekam anyapadārthe (bahuvrīhi)] — would denote the field’. Similarly, p. 116 l. 2-3: triṛāśiḥ prayojanam asya gaṇitasyeti triairāśikah ‘the triairāśika (‘rule of three’) is called thus because three quantities (triṛāśi) are the purpose

1185 This enumeration is not exhaustive even with regard to passages identified in the text. Passages from the Mahābhāṣya are identified p. 3 l. 7-9, p. 8 l. 1-2, p. 23 l. 25-26; but they are not mentioned in the appendix.

1186 It is tempting to see, furthermore, in the line loke ca na so ‘sti gaṇita-prakārah yo ‘yam vṛddhyātamo ‘pacayātamo vā na bhavati (p. 44 l. 6-7; introducing Gaṇita-pāda 1) a reflection of Vkp 1.131ab: na so ‘sti pratyaya loke yah sābdānugamād rte. Cp. however na so ‘sti puruso loke yo na kāmayate śriyam in Jagajjyotirmallā’s Ślokāśarasamgraha, quoted from the Hitopadeśa (Lindtner 2000: 60, 65).

1187 Mahā-bh II p. 246 l. 6: sāmānyacodanāś tu viṣeṣeṣv avatiṣṭhante.

1188 Mahā-bh I p. 5 l. 28: yah sarvathā ciram jīvati sa varṣaśatam jīvati.

1189 Mahā-bh III p. 32 l. 4-5.

1190 Mahā-bh II p. 437 l. 2. Mahā-bh II p. 218 l. 15-16 (on P. 4.1.48 vt. 3) gives as example of tāṭsthyaḥ: maṇḍa hasanti, where Bhāskara gives maṇḍaḥ kroṣanti.

1191 The Kāśikā on P. 6.4.11 has samāsānto vidhir antiyāḥ with variant reading samāsāntavidhīr antiyāḥ.
(práyojana) of this calculation" contains an implicit reference to P. 5.1.109 práyojana, which prescribes the suffix thāṇī (≡ iṅka). The immediately preceding line trayo rāṣāyaḥ samāhrtaḥ trikṛṣiḥ "three quantities combined are [called] trikṛṣiḥ" implicitly refers to P. 2.1.51 (taddhīrtārtharopadassamāhāre ca) and 52 (sankhyāpārvo dvīguḥ) which prescribe the compound called samāhāra dvīgu, which is a kind of tatpurṣa. P. 7 l. 3 tasmin kramake bhavaḥ krākačikah and p. 11 l. 3 navānte bhavaṁ navāntyam similarly refer to P. 4.3.53 tatra bhavaḥ; p. 180 l. 15 ādau bhavati iti ādyaḥ to P. 4.3.54 (digādibhyo yat). P. 2 l. 4 kvāpratayayena pārvakālakriyā 'bhidhiyate evokes P. 3.4.21 samānakarṣyayoh pārvakāle (ktvā 18). In a way each and every analysis of a compound — of which there are numerous instances in the Āryabhaṭīya Bhāṣya, even though their technical names are rarely used — can be considered an implicit reference to Pāṇini's grammar. The influence of Patañjali's Mahābhāṣya on early mathematical literature can also be deduced from the fact that Bhāskara refers to the works of Maskarī(ṇ), Pūraṇa and Mudgala as providing the laksāna and the lakṣya of various branches of mathematics; these are precisely the terms used in the Pāsapāṅika of the Mahābhāṣya to designate grammar: laksāna designates the sūtras, lakṣya the objects to be studied, i.e. words in the case of grammar.\footnote{\textit{Compare Āryabhaṭīya Bhāṣya} p. 7 l. 7-8 (\textit{etad ekaikasya granthalakṣanalanakṣyam maskaripūranamudgalaprabhṛtibhir ācāryair nibaddham kṛtaṃ ...}) with Mahā-bh I p. 12 l. 15-17 (lakṣyalakṣane vyākaranam [vt. 14] laksyam ca laksanam caītat samudītāṃ vyākaranam bhavati/ kim punar laksyam laksanam ca/ śabdol lakṣyaḥ sūtram laksanam/).}

It is in this context interesting to note that Bhāskara refers to Āryabhata's text using these same expressions laksāna and sūtra: lakṣana infrequently, e.g. p. 74 l. 3; sūtra very often.\footnote{David Pingree (private communication) informs me that this employment of sūtra became common in commentaries on mathematical and astronomical texts. In other disciplines the word sūtra refers much less commonly to a metrical mūla text; two texts that do so are the \textit{Yuktidīpīkā} (on the Sāṃkhya-kārikā) and the Abhidharmakośabhāṣya. They can coincide with verses, in which case Bhāskara, in the first chapter, uses the expression gitikāsūtra (or gītikāsūtra, gītasūtra; e.g. Āryabhaṭīya Bhāṣya p. 1 l. 10-11, p. 7 l. 13 & 16, p. 11 l. 14 & 20, etc.), elsewhere āryāsūtra (e.g. p. 247 l. 20).} This means that Bhāskara, like Patañjali, uses the terms lakṣana and sūtra as synonyms. This is particularly clear on p. 49 l. 16, where the two are simply juxtaposed to each other; p. 51 l. 12 cites a laksanāsūtra. [It is clear from his discussion that these sūtras do not always coincide with the verses of Āryabhata,\footnote{They can coincide with verses, in which case Bhāskara, in the first chapter, uses the expression gitikāsūtra (or gītikāsūtra, gītasūtra; e.g. Āryabhaṭīya Bhāṣya p. 1 l. 10-11, p. 7 l. 13 & 16, p. 11 l. 14 & 20, etc.), elsewhere āryāsūtra (e.g. p. 247 l. 20).} but can be parts of them. An extreme case is verse 19 of the \textit{Ganitatāpāda}, in which Bhāskara distinguishes no fewer than five different sūtras.\footnote{\textit{Āryabhaṭīya Bhāṣya} p. 105 l. 12-17; p. 107 l. 10-11.}]

## Appendix X: Was there Buddhism in Gandhāra at the time of Alexander?\footnote{I thank Nathan McGovern for useful comments.}

A recent book by Christopher Beckwith (\textit{Greek Buddha: Pyrrho's Encounter with Early Buddhism in Central Asia}; 2015) claims that the Greek philosopher Pyrrho, who accompanied Alexander and his army, became acquainted with a form of Buddhism in Gandhāra (“during his years in Bactria and Gandhāra”, p. 54). This, to be sure, was not the religion of Calanus, for “[t]he sect of Calanus, the Indian ‘Gymnosophist’ or ‘naked wise man’ best known to the Greeks and most described in Greek sources, is a non-Buddhist sect” (Beckwith 2015: 64). The religion that Pyrrho encountered was an early
form of Buddhism, far earlier than the ancient Buddhist scriptures which, at best, preserve some traces of the early teaching. “[T]raditional ‘early’ Buddhist canonical literature”, Beckwith observes (p. 28 n. 28), “reflects Normative Buddhism …, a product of the … Saka-Kushan period.” Pyrrho’s teachings are the earliest and most reliable testimony we have about early Buddhism: “The earliest attested philosophical-religious system that is both historically datable and clearly recognizable as a form of Buddhism is Early Pyrrhonism, the teachings and practices of Pyrrho of Elis and Timon of Phlius …” (p. 61). And again (p. 62): “… ‘genuinely Early’ Buddhism (or Pre-Normative Buddhism) is attested earliest and best in Early Pyrrhonism …”

Beckwith does not stop here. He also maintains that the Buddha was a Scythian (p. 5 ff.), who spent time in Gandhāra. His teaching was a rejection of Zoroastrianism that had arrived in that region as a result of the Persian conquest of Gandhāra: “Both Early Buddhism and Early Brahmานism are the direct outcome of the introduction of Zoroastrianism into eastern Gandhāra by Darius I.” (p. 9). Early Zoroastrianism, Beckwith points out (p. 8), is “a strongly monotheistic faith with a creator God, Ahura Mazda, and with ideas of absolute Truth … versus ‘the Lie’ …, and of an accumulation of Good and Bad deeds — that is, ‘karma’ — which determined whether a person would be rewarded by ‘rebirth’ in Heaven.” The Buddha, he claims (p. 172), “rejected the ideas of karma, rebirth, and Heaven (vs. Hell), which are typical of Early Zoroastrianism, a religion introduced to Central Asia and northwestern India by the Achaemenid Persians”. Brahmanism arrived only later in that part of the subcontinent, and was from the beginning influenced by (early) Buddhism.

These are extraordinary claims. Beckwith bases them on methodical considerations. Unlike virtually all other scholars of early Buddhism, he draws conclusions primarily from datable sources, giving preference to the earliest ones: “My approach in the book is to base all of my main arguments on hard data — inscriptions, datable manuscripts, other dated texts, and archaeological reports. I do not allow traditional belief to determine anything in the book …” (p. XII-XIII). Apart from Pyrrho, the early authors that Strabo cites — Megasthenes and others — are of central importance: “the received version of Strabo … preserves part of the earliest dated eyewitness account of Indian philosophical-religious practices and ideas by far. It is therefore incalculably more important than any of the other texts traditionally considered to represent or reflect Early Buddhism”. (p. 68). “Indian sources … are mostly a millennium or more younger, have never been properly edited, and consist largely of fantasy” (p. 68 n. 23).

We will consider below how Beckwith proceeds. His restriction of sources is reminiscent of the drunk who lost his keys in the dark and decided to look for them only under the streetlight. Beckwith’s procedure suggests an even more extreme comparison, in which the drunk claims that whatever he finds there must be his keys, simply because he finds them under the streetlight. The early data that Beckwith finds must be the teaching of early Buddhism, simply because they can be dated early. The fact that he has to look for those data in early Greece does not deter him.

Beckwith is aware that in his understanding of early Buddhism he differs from most scholars. Most scholars think Buddhism arose in the same region as Jainism and Ajivikism, approximately at the same time. Buddhism and Jainism (and to some extent Ajivikism) are generally looked upon as responses to a shared problem, linked to the belief in rebirth and karmic retribution. For Beckwith, on the other hand, it is important to
show that Buddhism, Jainism and Ajivikism did not originate in the same region at the same time, and he goes to great lengths trying to prove this.

Consider what he says about Jainism (p. 160):

In the Jainist view, Mahāvīra, the founder of the Jains, was a contemporary of the Buddha, and they knew each other, as did the founders of the other great ancient Indian sects. This is a wonderful story … Nevertheless, scholars have demonstrated, piece by piece, in many studies of individual contradictory problems in Early Buddhism and other ancient Indian belief systems, that the other traditions have reconfigured themselves so as to be as old as Buddhism, or in some cases, as with the Jains, even older. They demonstrate as clearly as anyone could have done that the story of the Buddha is the oldest of the lot. Although some may wonder why the non-Buddhists made such claims, there are … many good reasons for them to want to imitate the Buddhists’ success.

This passage contains a rather elementary mistake. It describes the situation the wrong way round: the claim that the Buddha and Mahāvīra were contemporaries is not made in Jaina texts. This, one would think, should have an effect on Beckwith’s conclusions. In spite of this, he states (p. 70):

we have no remotely credible evidence that [Gautama Śākamuni] knew anything about Jains, Ājīvikas, or other non-Brahmanist sects. … [T]hese sects are unattested in any dated or datable Pre-Normative Buddhist sources. It is because their teachings needed to be refuted and rejected by much later Buddhists that they eventually appeared in the written Buddhist tradition, but in works that are patently late doctrinally, full of magic and other forms of fantasy, and unreliable in every other way.

Since in Beckwith’s opinion Jainism is much younger than Buddhism, he does not need to bother trying to understand Buddhism and Jainism as contemporary products of one single region. This in any case is Beckwith’s position.

We have seen that one reason Beckwith gives to show that Jainism is much younger than Buddhism is shaky. The claim is also confronted with other difficulties: Jainas and Ājīvikas are mentioned in some of the so-called inscriptions of Aśoka. This suggests that these movements were around about a century after Alexander, a century therefore after Pyrrho supposedly became acquainted with Early Buddhism in Gandhāra. Predictably, Beckwith makes a major effort to show that the inscription that refers to Jainas and Ājīvikas, the “Seventh Pillar Edict” (only found in Delhi-Topra), may be “not just spurious, it is probably a deliberate forgery” (p. 249). It is “an obvious forgery from a later historical period” (p. 250). The Ājīvikas are also mentioned in the Barābar Hill cave inscriptions. According to Beckwith, these inscriptions “are (or perhaps should be) attributed to Aśoka’s grandson Daśaratha” (p. 236 n. 38). However, this does not constitute evidence for an early date for the Ājīvikas (p. 237-238): “Considering the fact

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1197 Nathan McGovern points in a personal communication out that Beckwith might argue that this claim in Buddhist texts is made under the influence of a contemporaneous claim in Jaina texts. Apart from the fact that no such Jaina texts have survived, it would make Beckwith’s argument considerably more complicated and recherché.
that we have absolutely no reliable historical information on ‘Aśoka’, and the fact … that the Major Inscriptions stood in open view for centuries after their erection and must have influenced the later writers of the Buddhist ‘histories’ in question, it is most likely that ‘Aśoka’ was not in fact a Mauryan ruler. We do not really know when or where he ruled, if he existed at all; we do not actually know that Daśaratha was the grandson of a Mauryan ruler named Aśoka; and so on.” In other words, there is no early datable evidence for the existence of the Ājīvikas, and since the Ājīvikas are inseparable from the early Jainas, there is no early datable evidence for Jainism either.

We see from the above that Beckwith systematically questions all evidence that might suggest that there were Jainas and Ājīvikas at the time of the Buddha. This obliges him to reconsider what the term śramaṇa refers to. In the Pali canon it refers to both Buddhist and non-Buddhist (and non-Brahmanical) ascetics, including Jainas and Ājīvikas, but this understanding can be ignored, since it is “based on historically unreliable Indian accounts composed and written down many centuries later” (p. 95). The term śramaṇa in early datable sources, Beckwith claims, refers to Buddhists only: the term “specifically and exclusively meant ‘Buddhist practitioners’.” (p. 69). More specifically, the Śramaṇas are one of the five Buddhist varieties that Beckwith distinguishes, and which include, beside Śramaṇas and early Pyrrhonism, early Taoism, the “Dharma of the Mauryan king Devānāmpriya Priyadarśi”, and pre-Pure Land (p. 63-64).

Beckwith does not mention the fact that the Alexander historians do not mention Śramaṇas. The early datable sources that do, include the authentic “Aşokan” inscriptions, and the testimony of Megasthenes and other foreigners. In spite of Beckwith, these sources never unambiguously use the term to refer to Buddhists only. He says the following about them (p. 103):

Observations by foreign visitors and the usage by the ruler Devānāmpriya Priyadarśi in the authentic Major Inscriptions of the Mauryas in the early third century BC agree that there were Brāhmaṇas, Śramaṇas, and “other sects”. That unambiguously means that the followers of the “other sects” could not be Brāhmaṇas or Śramaṇas. Moreover, the so-called Seventh Pillar Edict on the Delhi-Topra column refers to the Jains and Ājīvikas as pāśāṃḍā ‘(philosophical-religious) schools’, not as śramaṇas.

We can skip Beckwith’s weak and unconvincing attempts to show that Megasthenes’ Śramaṇas are Buddhists and Buddhists only (p. 67 ff.), and turn directly to the Inscriptions. Brahmins, Śramaṇas and “other sects” (pāśāṃḍa) are indeed mentioned in the Thirteenth Rock Edict, but this passage tells us nothing about what exactly the term śramaṇa refers to; it merely suggests that pāśāṃḍa/pāśāṃḍa (Skt. pāśānda) is a general term that can also cover Brahmins and Śramaṇas. The Seventh Pillar Edict refers to the samgha, the Brahmins and Ājīvikas, the Nirgranthas (= Jainas), and to various (other)

1198 Karttunen 1997: 56 ff. Halkias’s (2014: 74) claim to the extent that “Alexander and the philosophers at his court had knowledge of Indian religions comprising brahmins and śramaṇas, the so-called samanai … in the Greek sources” is not based on any evidence I know of.
1199 The fragmentary Greek version of the Thirteenth Rock Edict from Kandahar speaks of “Brāhmaṇas, Śramaṇas and others debating the dhamma” (p. 95). Unlike Beckwith, we cannot draw conclusions from this.
sects (pāsamda) (Beckwith p. 96); this confirms our impression that pāsamda is a general term. Here the text clearly refers to Buddhists, without using the term śramaṇa (it uses samgha instead). For Beckwith this merely confirms that the Seventh Pillar Edict is late (“an obvious forgery from a later historical period”; see above).

One would expect Beckwith to deny that the Buddha had any links with the region of Magadhā at all; wasn’t the Buddha a Scythian who protested against the Zoroastrianism that was present in Gandhāra? In point of fact, he is ambiguous about this. On one hand he admits that the Buddha may have reached his enlightenment in Magadhā, and that Early Buddhism may have spread from Magadhā northwestward into western Gandhāra, Bactria, and beyond (p. 11). This would leave the question why a doctrine critical of Early Zoroastrianism should have been proclaimed for the first time in a region where Early Zoroastrianism was completely unknown. On the other hand, he maintains that certain facts necessitate the Buddha having lived in a different region from Magadhā, such as Gandhāra, which then “agrees … with his rejection of specifically Zoroastrian ideas, which were hardly known in Magadhā before the Middle Ages” (p. 166). He is evidently not disturbed by the fact that “[n]o ancient Buddhist source relating to the Buddha’s times, … no sūtra has any allusion to Gandhāra or Sindh, at that time loosened [sic] parts of the Achaemenid Empire” (Fussman 2009: 9).

In spite of his rejection of the early Buddhist texts in favour of datable sources, Beckwith does some cherry-picking from those canonical texts where this suits him. He justifies this in the following words (p. 29 n. 28): “study of the inner logic of the Buddha’s own teachings (to the extent that it is agreed what they were) … allows inclusion or exclusion of various elements”. Unfortunately, here he makes again a major mistake. As one of the characteristics of his reconstructed early Buddhism — indeed as the Buddha’s “most important, distinctive, striking teaching” (p.121), “the Buddha’s basic teaching” (p. 251 note ii) — he mentions anatman “no (innate) self (-identity)”: “it is applied to all dharmas, including humans, so it of course includes the idea of the human ‘self-identity’” (p. 30-31); “dharmas do not have inherent self-identities” (p. 35); “things’ (including people) do not have inherent self-identities” (p. 82). Unfortunately for Beckwith’s theory, research has shown that the early Buddhist canon does not deny a self (or self-identity), and that the more recent Buddhist preoccupation with the topic is based on a tendentious reinterpretation of those texts. This removes one of the most important reasons to link up Pyrrho with early Buddhism, for “[Pyrrho] taught that pragmata ‘matters, affairs’ — including people — do not have their own innate self-identity (… Greek adiaphora).” (p. 92).

There is no need to go into further details. Contentwise there is no connection between early Buddhism and Pyrrho’s philosophy. The question that remains is: why should anyone ever think so? Here, I think, the answer is clear. Beckwith thinks that the Buddha was a “Sage of the Scythians”. This is his translation of the Sanskrit term

\[\text{\textsuperscript{1200}}\text{This does not necessarily mean that early Buddhism accepted the existence of a self: it simply does not raise the issue. This is very far from Beckwith’s claim that the rejection of a self (or of self-identity) is basic to the Buddha’s teaching. See also the following note.}\]

\[\text{\textsuperscript{1201}}\text{See Oetke 1988: 59-242; further Bronkhorst 2009: 123-125. The Sanskrit term anatman, and the Pāli equivalent anatta even more, is ambiguous, and can mean “is not the self” or “has no self”. Only the former interpretation (which does not deny the existence of a self) is demonstrably valid in the canonical scriptures, whereas the latter interpretation is adopted in more recent texts. Beckwith (p. 33) quotes a passage where Gethin correctly translates “they are not self (anatman/anattā)”, but overlooks the fact that this goes against his own interpretation.}\]
Śākamuni. Unfortunately this Sanskrit term is never used; the term used is Śākyamuni, which is not immediately open to Beckwith’s interpretation. Beckwith therefore maintains that Śākyamuni is a wrong Sanskritization, that the correct Sanskritization would be Śākamuni. Either way, it is the Sanskritization of an earlier Middle-Indic word. Unfortunately for Beckwith, this term “is unattested in the genuine Mauryan inscriptions or the Pali Canon” (p. 5).1202 “It is earliest attested, as Śākamuni, in the Gāndhārī Prakrit texts, which date to the first centuries AD (or possibly even the late first century BC)” (p. 5-6). Beckwith admits that it “is arguable that the epithet could have been applied to the Buddha during the Śāka (Saka or ‘Indo-Scythian’) Dynasty — that dominated northwestern India on and off from approximately the first century BC, continuing into the early centuries AD as Satraps or ‘vassals’ under the Kushans — and that the reason for it was strong support for Buddhism by the Sakas, Indo-Parthians, and Kushans.” Beckwith rejects this possibility, as he reject the idea that the Buddha was born in a north-Indian tribe or family that, for whatever historical reason, was called Saka (or Śāka, Śāka, Śākyya). For him it is certain that the Buddha was identified as a “Sage of the Scythians”. He does not explain why Buddhists who believed that the Buddha came from a different region altogether would still maintain that he was a Scythian.

There is a more fundamental difficulty with Beckwith’s interpretation of Gāndhārī Śākamuni. Stefan Baums, in a personal communication (6.10.2015), points out in the following words:

In Sanskrit … we have Śāka for the people and Śāka as the adjective. The intervocalic -k- in these words would be voiced to [ŋ] in Gāndhārī and should be written -g- ..., never -k-. The ethnonym is in fact attested in Gāndhārī, four times in one of the avadānas,1203 and once in the compound Sagastana on the Mathura Lion Capital.1204 Here the word uses the Iranian initial s, but certainly has the expected intervocalic -g-.

Turning to Śākyamuni, we have more than twenty attestations in Gāndhārī inscriptions and manuscripts, and in every single one of them the name is spelled with a -k-, which in Kharoṣṭhī orthography stands for double [kk] (as in Pali Sakkamuni).1205 We even have the spellings Śākimuni and Śākyamuna, though you may wish to consider the latter a Sanskritization.

A fundamental general weakness of Beckwith’s arguments is that he is not willing to consider that there can be undated sources that yet contain historical information. As pointed out earlier, this is like maintaining that the lost keys must be under the streetlight, because if they were anywhere else one would not see them. This may make some sense to scholars who are used to working with Chinese or other non-Indian materials.

1202 It does, of course, occur in the Minor Pillar Inscription at Lumbini, about which Beckwith says the following (2015: 245): “As for other well-known but evidently spurious ‘Aśokan’ inscriptions, note that the ‘Minor Pillar Inscription’ at Lumbini not only mentions ‘Buddha’ …. it explicitly calls him Śākyamuni [in reality sakyamuni, as Ingo Strauch reminds me; JB] ‘the Sage of the Scythians (Sakas)’, who it says was born in Lumbini. The use of the Sanskrit form of his epithet, Śākyamuni, rather than the Prakrit form, Śakamuni, is astounding and otherwise unattested until the late Gāndhārī documents; that fact alone rules out ascription to such an early period.”

1203 Baums refers to the following entry in the Dictionary of Gāndhārī:
http://gandhari.org/a_dictionary.php?searchs=saga$

1204 Baums refers to the following entry: http://gandhari.org/a_dictionary.php?searchs=sagastana$

1205 http://gandhari.org/a_dictionary.php?searchs=śākamuni$
Indologists have learned to work with non-dated materials (i.e., to look for keys in the dark), and not all of their work is for this reason worthless. Exclusive insistence on dated material would not just undermine all we think we know about historical Buddhism, it would bring down much else in its destructive élan. Fortunately there is no justification for imposing this limitation. So one thing is sure: nothing in Beckwith’s book compels us to think that there were Buddhists in Gandhāra at the time of Alexander.
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Yājñavalkyasmṛti = Yājñavalkya Dharmasāstra.


Yijing. See under Takakusu 1896.


Abbreviation:

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<td>Abhidh-k(VP)</td>
<td>Vasubandhu, Abhidharmakośa, traduit et annoté par Louis de La Vallée Poussin, 6 vols., Paris 1923-1931</td>
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<td>Abhidh-k-bh(Hi)</td>
<td>Akira Hirakawa, Index to the Abhidharmakośabhāṣya, pt. 1-3, Tokyo 1973-1978</td>
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<tr>
<td>ABORI</td>
<td>Annals of the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute, Poona</td>
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<td>AHES</td>
<td>Archive for History of Exact Sciences</td>
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<td>AitBr</td>
<td>Aitareya Brāhmaṇa</td>
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<td>AL</td>
<td>Abhyankar and Limaye’s edition of Bhartṛhari’s Mahābhāṣya Dipikā</td>
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<td>AN</td>
<td>Aṅguttara-Nikāya, ed. R. Morris, E. Hardy, 5 vols., London 1885-1900 (PTS); vol. 6 (Indexes, by M. Hunt and C. A. F. Rhys Davids), London 1910 (PTS)</td>
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<td>Alt- und Neu-Indische Studien, Hamburg</td>
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<td>AVŚ</td>
<td>Atharva Veda (Śaunakīya)</td>
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<td>Bibliotheca Buddhica, St. Petersburg (Leningrad)</td>
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IsMEO Istituto Italiano per il Medio ed Estremo Oriente, Roma
Jā Jātaka (= Fausbøll, 1877-1896)
JA Journal Asiaticque, Paris
JaimBr Jaiminiya Brähmaṇa
JIP Journal of Indian Philosophy, Dordrecht
JORM Journal of Oriental Research, Madras
JPTS Journal of the Pali Text Society, London
KāṭhS Kāṭhaka Saṃhitā
KauṣBr Kauṣṭakī Brāhmaṇa
KauṣUp Kauśitaki Upaniṣad (= Olivelle 1998: 324-361)
KILchr Kleine Schriften (Serie der Glasenapp-Stiftung), Wiesbaden, Stuttgart
KRV Kashmir Rgveda
Lal(V) Lalitavistara, ed. P.L. Vaidya, Darbhanga 1958 (Buddhist Sanskrit Texts, 1)
Mahā-bh Patañjali, (Vyākarana-)Mahābhāṣya, ed. F. Kielhorn, Bombay 1880-1885
MaitS Maitrāyaṇī Saṃhitā
MaitUp Maitrāyaṇīya Upaniṣad (= van Buitenen 1962: 97-122)
Manu Māṇava Dharmaśāstra, ed. Oliveville 2005
MCB Mélanges chinois et bouddhiques, Bruxelles
Mhbh Mahābhārata, crit. ed. V.S. Sukthankar u.a., Poona 1933-66 (Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute, Poona)
Mil Milindapañha, ed. V. Trenckner, London 1880
Mimāṃsākoṣa Mimāṃsākośaḥ, 7 parts, ed. Kevalanandasaraswati, Wai 1952-1966
MN Majjhima-Nikāya, ed. V. Trenckner, R. Chalmers, 3 vols., London 1888-1899 (PTS)
MPS Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra
Mṣ Manuscript of Bhartrṛhari’s Mahābhāṣya Dīpikā
MSS Māṇava Śrāutasūtra
Mvu  Mahāvastu-Avadāna, ed. Émile Senart, 3 vols., Paris 1882-1897
MW  Monier Monier-Williams, A Sanskrit-English Dictionary, Oxford 1899
NBh  Nyāyabhāṣya of Pakṣilasvāmin Vātsyāyana
Nir  Nirukta
Nm  Nyāyamañjarī of Jayanta Bhaṭṭa
N.S.  New Series
NV  Nyāyavārttika de Uddyotakara
P.  Pāñinian sūtra
PārGS  Pāraskara Gṛhyasūtra
PEFEO  Publications de l'École Française d'Extrême-Orient, Paris
PEW  Philosophy East and West
Pp.  Padapātha
PTS  Pali Text Society, London
RPr  Rgveda Prātiṣākhyā
RV  Rgveda
ŚaṅGS  Śaṅkhāyana Gṛhyasūtra
Sn  Suttanipāta, ed. D. Andersen, H. Smith, London 1913 (PTS)
SN  Saṁyutta Nikāya (PTS edition)
Sp.  Saṁhitāpātha
ŚPaBr  Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa (Mādhyandina)
ŚPaBrK  Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa (Kāṇvīya recension) = Caland, 1926.
ŚtII  Studien zur Indologie und Iranistik
Sw  Swaminathan’s edition of Bhartṛhari’s Mahābhāṣya Dīpikā
taitBr  Taittariya Brāhmaṇa
taitS  Taittirīya Saṁhitā
tanVār  Tantravārttika of Kumārilabhaṭṭa (ASS, 97)
tatKaum  Tattvakaumudi of Vācaspati Miśra
TI  Taishō Shinshū Daizōkyō or Taishō Issaikyō, 100 vols., Tōkyō 1924 ff.
TSWS  Tibetan Sanskrit Works Series, Patna
Vasiṣthā Dharmasūtra
VasDhS  Vasiṣṭha Dharmasūtra
Viy  Viyāhapannavatti (Jaina-Āgama-Series 4)
VS(C)  Vaiśeṣikasūtra of Kanāda with the commentary of Candrānanda, ed. Muni Śrī Jambuvijayaji, reprint: Oriental Institute, Baroda, 1982
vt.  vārttika on Pāñinian sūtra
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